

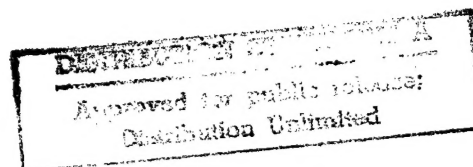
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Latin America Report

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12 June 1984

LATIN AMERICA REPORT

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FNM LEADER BLASTS PLP, PINDLING FOR GOVERNMENT FAILINGS

Bostwick at Rally

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 17 Apr 84 p 1

[Article by Anthony Forbes]

[Text] FNM Senate Leader J. Henry Bostwick declared Thursday night at an opposition rally that the Bahamas is being governed by default and that Bahamians are beginning to realize that in order to salvage anything for the next generation the PLP Government must be changed quickly.

"We are in a situation in this country where we are having what I prefer to call a Government by default," Senator Bostwick, a former Official Opposition Leader, told hundreds attending the rally at the Golden Gates Shopping Centre Thursday.

"And I find it not to my liking that we have in control of our destiny, in control of the day-to-day running of this country, a group of men who must be more concerned about saving their own skin at this time than about doing the peoples' business," Mr Bostwick said.

The Opposition Senate Chief said that instead of being able to get down to business of looking after the nation's affairs, for which they are more than well paid, it seemed as if Government is daily concerned with devising one scheme after another whereby they may remain in control.

"All sense of honesty and fair play have gone out of the window," he said. "All sense of commitment and decency, I wouldn't talk about hard work... they never knew what that was..but everything they do turns out to be designed to embarrass the will of the people...to frustrate the will of the people and to do whatever is necessary to remain where they are, regardless of what the position is in the country.

"But you see this Government will not escape the wrath that will befall them," he said. "There is no doubt in my mind whatsoever that the social ills which now affects this country, including the rape epidemic, could and will be laid squarely at the feet of the misgovernment of the country by the PLP."

He said that the marijuana cult could be traced directly to the PLP inviting the "God of Marijuana" to the Bahamas and giving him VIP treatment.

"Not too long after that, our youngsters started to look and to behave like Bob Marley," he said.

Mr Bostwick said that one can also see the state of employment in the country as well as the poor housing in Grants Town and in other areas of this country.

"All of the social ills, all of the social conducts which we find and of which we complain when we analyse and get to the bottom of it all, you will find that the end product is no more than as somebody said long time ago you sow the wind, you reap the whirlwind," he said.

"The PLP has been sowing the seeds of evil and discontent for the full 17 years and over in this country and we are now beginning to feel some of the ill effects of that," Mr Bostwick said.

"Some of us have been warning you for many, many years back since 1970 or thereabout, where their policies were going to end up," he said. "I am happy to see that at long last. Sad because it has caused us so much pain, sad because it has caused us so many lives wrecked and ruined, but I love my homeland."

Senator Bostwick said that finally the Bahamian people are beginning to realize that if they are going to salvage anything for the next generation then they have got to change this government and change it quickly.

He said that it is very unusual for any opposition party to be campaigning such as the FNM is doing only two years after a general election.

"But we realize...we too have finally come to realize that you do not win elections in the six months just before the people go to vote," he said, telling supporters not to be surprised at Saturday's visit to Kemps Bay, Andros, the Prime Minister's constituency.

He noted that last week the FNM were in Abaco and the previous week the opposition party tool Eleuthera by storm.

"This is the way it is going to be from here on in," he said. "L.O. Pindling and his rascals will have no rest. We will keep the heat on them and everything they think they got away with something and think they could take a little rest, we will find somewhere else to hit them."

The Opposition Senate Leader told the crowd he wants them to realize that whatever the FNM does, it can only do so long as it is convinced it has their moral support.

"Because it is no use we getting up on the platform and shouting the cause of the FNM and pointing out the faults of the Government if we do not have you to back us," Mr Bostwick said.

"So do not hesitate whenever, wherever, however, to give the leaders of the party your undivided commitment and your open support," he said. "There is absolutely nothing for you to fear except fear itself."

"This party is now on the march to victory and those of us who have been in the wilderness for so long, we have now begun to see the light," he said. "Come with us, join hands and let the victory be ours to share."

Attack on Pindling

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 18 Apr 84 p 6

[Article by Anthony Forbes]

[Text] Opposition Free National Movement Senate Leader J. Henry Bostwick declared Thursday night that the Bahamas is "our land" and Prime Minister Sir Lynden Pindling, Transport Minister Philip Bethel and those who think otherwise "can go straight to...."

Addressing a rally of the official opposition party at the R.M. Bailey School grounds, Mr Bostwick said that he never heard so much nonsense as the Prime Minister "spewed out" during a rally the previous Friday night in the school's nearby auditorium.

"Once again Mr Pindling tried to pull a big hoax over the Bahamian people's face," Mr Bostwick said. "All that mess he's got on his doorstep, he's got time to go down in the school there with decent people's names in his mouth."

"Because that was really a coward's action for Mr Pindling to stand up before anybody in these times to accuse anybody of exposing him," Mr Bostwick said. "You see, that is what he is saying, you know. He is saying that finally the FNM has got some sense. Finally the FNM decided to employ some people to keep a check on us and those people finally found out some things about us that we find to be very embarrassing."

"And like he has always done anything you find out about the PLP or say anything about the PLP, you are an enemy of the people, not an enemy of the PLP, mind you, but Philip Bethel and L.O. Pindling and a lot of them, they really believe...they really believe...I thought they used to be joking, but they really believe that the PLP is the Bahamas and they really believe that Pindling is the Bahamas, and that Kendal Nottage is the Bahamas," he said.

"But like (Holy Cross candidate Cedric) Parker said, this land is our land and Pindling and Philip Bethel and all of them who think otherwise can go straight to...." Mr Bostwick said.

Pointing out that the Prime Minister said that he has got the FNM now, Mr Bostwick asked: "Got who, got what, he has got me for what, got the Leader for what?"

"Why don't he answer what NBC has said and all that juicy stuff I read in The Tribune last night (Wednesday) what Kojak say, why he don't talk about that?" he asked.

"Talking about he has got the Morgan Cherry Report, well I want Mr Pindling to know that he is going to get plenty more reports not just the Cherry Report, he is going to get the Grapefruit Report, then he is going to get the Orange Report, the Pineapple Report, and the Sugarapple Report, all kind of report since it reporting on it," Mr Bostwick said.

He said that it is time that the hard, cold facts in the political life of the country be faced.

"Pindling has got his spies inside the FNM. We ain't stupid enough to believe Pindling don't get information out of the FNM," he said. "And Pindling would be a bigger fool if he don't know we have got spies in the PLP."

"This thing go with sense. Tuesday night we know what happened Tuesday day. And Pindling know that," Mr Bostwick said.

South Andros Meeting

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 16 Apr 84 pp 1, 5

[Article by Marcia Bethell]

[Excerpts] An FNM Task Force, traveling to South Andros this weekend were prevented from holding public meetings in government school buildings in Driggs Hill and Kemps Bay, although they had received permission to do so from the Ministry of Education before leaving Nassau. Reports in the district claim that the order came from "the big man" in Nassau.

Opposition leader Kendal Isaacs, Montague representative Orville Turnquest, Blue Hills representative Arthur Foulkes and secretary-general L. Garth Wright were granted permission to use both schools for meetings in a letter signed by the Deputy Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Anthony Wilson. A telegram was also dispatched to the relevant authorities in South Andros.

However, when the FNM arrived in Andros on Friday, they were immediately told of rumours circulating in the constituency that word had come from the "big man" in Nassau that the FNM were not to be allowed to hold any meetings in the schools.

According to an FNM spokesman today, the headmistress at Driggs Hill Primary School reportedly caught an early morning flight into Nassau on Friday. The keys for the school could not be found.

The headmaster and also Island District Officer, Mr Walker, also caught a flight into Nassau, taking the keys for the South Andros High School with him.

However, the FNM spokesman said that despite the obvious setbacks, a well attended meeting was held at Orthnel Lewis' Lounge in the Bluff.

"This latest ruse by the PLP to frustrate the FNM backfired," the spokesman said. "The people in the area were incensed at the low-down doggish attitude displayed by the PLP. Many of them are up in arms over what happened."

Opposition Leader Kendal Isaacs told the people at the meeting that for 17 years the Prime Minister has done nothing in the area. He pointed out that many of them were unemployed.

"If you have no jobs," Mr Isaacs said, "what can Pindling take away from you? You have everything to gain and nothing to lose by voting for the FNM. Nothing can be worse than what you have endured under the PLP government for 17 years," Mr Isaacs said.

Montagu representative Orville Turnquest said: "I cry shame on the Prime Minister for the neglect and for how little he has done in his constituency. A single word from him could produce electricity and running water in the Kemp's Bay Constituency," Mr Turnquest said.

He told South Andosians that they have been taken for granted. "He thinks so little of you. You have been neglected more than any other area and I think it's a damn shame," he said.

Mr Turnquest pointed out there are three ways a government can remain in power. Through good and honest governing; buying its way through patronage and by giving out handouts to a selected few. He accused the PLP of using the second and third methods to retain their power.

PLP Defection

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 16 Apr 84 p 1

[Article by Marcia Bethell]

[Excerpts] One of Prime Minister Pindling's strongest generals in past elections, Mr Shervin Bain, publicly declared his support for the Free National Movement at a rally on Friday night in the Kemp's Bay Constituency, sending shockwaves throughout the Andros district.

Mr Bain, who has campaigned strongly for the Prime Minister since 1967 and who admits he was involved in attempting to violently prevent an FNM meeting in Kemp's Bay Constituency in 1972, today pointed out that residents were promised electricity in 1978, but are still waiting.

"I have supported Pindling all my life, and the man has not done a thing for my people. All he does is drive through the settlement in the Commissioner's car up to Rahming's place, then back to the Las Palmas hotel," Mr Bain told a large crowd attending the FNM rally. "I am prepared to go all out. I

don't owe the PLP anything and I don't like the way they are manipulating the people of South Andros," Mr Bain declared.

"The people of South Andros are fed up with the condition of things in Kemp's Bay. With hard work and determination the FNM will be able to win the seat from the Prime Minister," Mr Bain said. "The chances in Kemp's Bay for the FNM look pretty good and I am prepared to go all the way to bring about better conditions in South Andros."

Accusing some in the PLP of "aiding and abetting violence in the country," Mr Bain told about an incident during the 1972 general elections when he was instructed to prevent an FNM meeting in the Bluff from taking place in the schoolroom. The meeting was attended by Cecil Wallace-Whitfield. He said he was instructed to use violence if necessary.

"I realize now that those things are not the answer," Mr Bain said. Mr Bain said, "people in South Andros are afraid to attend FNM meetings because of victimization."

Mr Bain pleaded with all South Androsians to support the FNM, telling them that FNM leader Kendal Isaacs is a "gentleman" believing in "justice and fairplay."

"The FNM is the only alternative to a corrupt PLP government," the former PLP general stated. "I am prepared to go all out, and I call upon you my brothers and sisters to march forward on to victory in faith with the Torch."

CSO: 3298/825

ISSUE OF PLP FAVORITISM, NEGLECT RAISED BY OPPOSITON FNM

Development Bank Situation

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 9 Apr 84 p 1

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Hanna Wednesday denied an article in the Free National Movement newspaper, The Torch, which, he claimed, reported that the Bahamas Development Bank is for PLP's.

Mr Hanna, who is also Minister of Finance, said that some of the country's most prestigious bankers are on the Board of the BDB and have good reputations.

"No instructions were given to them at any time that they were to deny loans to non-PLPs," the Deputy Prime Minister said.

Mr Hanna said that he is certain some FNMs are among persons benefitting from the BDB loans.

"It was never a policy of the Bahama Development Bank and they have had no such instructions," he added.

"I would be very surprised if any one is asked if he or she is a PLP or not," Mr Hanna said.

Mr Hanna's denial came as he moved a resolution for government to guarantee the repayment of a \$3.5 million loan with interest to the National Insurance Board by the BDG.

He said that the purpose of the bank is to assist in the development of certain industries in the country and to maintain a fund it is necessary for the bank to have a guarantee that the loan is secured.

St John's MP Peter Bethel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Local Government, said that the resolution is the end result of a lot of work and consultations out of the realization that there are small-time fishermen and farmers who were not able to walk into a commercial bank and obtain loans, but who can now get the necessary loans through the bank.

Debate on the resolution was suspended to April 18 when Mr Bethel will resume his address.

Neglect in Abaco

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 9 Apr 84 p 1

[Article by Marcia Bethell]

[Excerpt] Abaco--Although they contribute over \$10 million annually to the public treasury, with \$1/2 million being collected monthly from customs duties alone, Abaco residents are being denied basic assistance from the PLP government, it was reported this weekend.

Spring City residents have been without electricity and water for over a week, simply because of a broken generator part. Hope Town residents have not heard a telephone ring in their settlement for six weeks. Since 1988 Guana Cay residents have been waiting for government to build a dock in their settlement. Marsh Harbour residents are complaining about poor water supply and Man-O-War Cay residents complained about foreigners invading their crawfish territory during closed season.

Marsh Harbour pilots complained about the "international" airport not having a control tower. They reported that at times when seven aircraft are lined up pilots depend on their own radio contact for landing or take-off.

The airport at Sandy Point is a national disgrace. Residents there complained that in 17 years government has not put doors or windows on a small "terminal building." The runway is unpaved and the wreckage of two aircraft have been left on the side of the runway.

The Great Abaco highway is in worse condition than it was last year when it claimed the lives of two St John's students and Fr Bruay Colebrooke on their way to a picnic in Sandy Point during a field trip. Unsafe for travelling by vehicles, an aircraft that recently attempted to use the pot-holed road as a landing strip remains on the roadside as a landmark.

Giving a large Free National Movement delegation a rousing and warm welcome this weekend, Abaco residents also complained that months go by and they do not see or hear from their PLP representative, Edison Key. In some settlements residents complained they have not seen Mr Key since the 1982 general election.

A number of Marsh Harbour residents have reported that Mr Key will not be seeking re-election in the next general election. It is understood that Mr Key has sold his shares in the Key and Sawyer Farms and that he is now a permanent Nassau resident, Unconfirmed reports circulating in Abaco are that Mr Key has become "disgruntled" with the PLP.

FNM High Rock representative Cecil Wallace-Whitfield told a community meeting in Guana Cay that although Mr Key may have the welfare of Abaco residents at heart, the PLP could not care less about Abaconians.

The delegation travelling to Abaco included FNM Leader Kendal Isaacs and Mrs Isaacs; chairman Mr and Mrs Whitfield; Mr and Mrs Bostwick; Mr Pierre Dupuch, Shirlea representative; Frank Watson, Carmichael; C.A. Smith, Marco City; Jimmy Knowles, Clarence Town; Senators Chuck Virgil and Merlene Hann; Torchbearers president Melvin Grant; vice president of the Women's Association Mrs Hilda Antonio; secretary general Garth Wright and others.

At a mass rally and cookout in Marsh Harbour on Saturday night, which attracted over 200 people, the residents of Abaco were urged by the FNM speakers to register now and be prepared for an early election. Those attending, including several persons who voted PLP in the last election, pledged their support to the Free National Movement.

More on Abaco Meetings

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 12 Apr 84 p 4

[Article by Marcia Bethell]

[Excerpts] The Free National Movement's call for Bahamians throughout the Bahamas to prepare for an early general election and support the FNM in removing the PLP government was heard by Abaco residents this weekend. Their response and commitment to the FNM was overwhelming.

FNM Chairman Cecil Wallace-Whitfield pointed out to hundreds of Abaconians attending several scheduled rallies that because of certain events in Nassau the Prime Minister will be forced to call an election before the year ends.

Abaco residents loudly applauded Mr Whitfield and assured the FNM they were prepared to do all they could to ensure a Free National Movement government.

However, FNM leader Kendal Isaacs told the crowds that words alone did not win an election. He said that campaigning and hard work was needed.

"We have to convince the majority of people that we will do a better job than the PLP. Whatever there might be against the Prime Minister he will not lie down and play dead," Mr Isaacs pointed out.

The FNM leader called on everyone committed to removing the PLP government to "get out and campaign. Take every opportunity to speak a word on behalf of the FNM," he said.

Again the Abaconians pledged their support to the FNM. Fed up with "an incompetent PLP government," the residents complained to the FNM delegation about the bad roads, poor water supply, bad telephone service and general neglect.

Farm produce grown in Abaco is exported directly to the United States and has grown into a multi-million dollar business. Not only does Marsh Harbour boast bigger shopping centres than any other island, but it also has a traffic light. Construction, a sure sign of economic growth, is clearly evident on

the island. The people are hard working, constructive and always considering ways to make greater strides forward.

On the weekend, the residents strongly supported the Free National Movement's policy on local government for the Family Islands to give residents a say in the day-to-day running of their island. A majority of Abaco residents have expressed the view that if the PLP government win the next election, they may consider becoming independent from the Bahamas.

From time to time reports about Abaco seceding from the rest of the Bahamas have been discussed.

However, the FNM leaders implored the people to support the FNM and put a "caring, concerned" government in power.

"We can no longer live in fear," Torchbearers president Melvin Grant told the people. "The PLP are like cornered animals, and if they are allowed to get away there is no telling what they will do if they win the next election. The FNM will be a government concerned for the FNM and the PLPs," he said.

Reference to Drug Issue

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 24 Apr 84 pp 6, 10

[Article by Marcia Bethell]

[Excerpts] Leading members of the Opposition Free National Movement took Abaco by storm recently, informing residents of what has happened to the Bahamas under an "uncaring" PLP government.

They talked of victimization, drug abuse and rising crime in the Bahamas.

At political rallies held in several Abaco settlements, residents came out in full force to support the FNM, eager to hear their message.

In Hope Town on April 6, Yamacraw MP Mrs Janet Bostwick informed the residents of this sleepy settlement that the Free National Movement did employ an American investigation agency to find out whether there was any truth to the NBC allegations of September 5, 1983.

"We would have been a worthless opposition if we did not find out the truth in this matter," Mrs Bostwick said. "Does this make us a traitor?" "No!" shouted the enthusiastic crowd.

She informed the residents of the growing crime problem in New Providence and told them how lucky they were that it did not exist on their island. Mrs Bostwick also told residents of how her motion to introduce more severe penalties for rape had not been dealt with at the April 4 session of the House of Assembly.

"Usually when the House meets on Wednesday and it does not finish its meeting that day we adjourn to the following day," Mrs Bostwick said. "But just before we got to the rape issue, Mr Hanna announced the adjournment. When I asked him why not come back tomorrow and deal with it, he told me it would not be convenient."

Mrs Bostwick said when she questioned Mr Hanna as to why it would not be convenient, she was told "we are not required to tell you Parliament's business."

"What are they going to do about the drug situation in this country?" Mrs Bostwick asked the residents. "What steps have they taken to fight crime in this country? What about the economy? These are things, you as Bahamians are interested in," she said.

Hope Town residents, who live a carefree life on their island that time forgot, walking along flagstone lanes lined with brightly painted cottages characteristic of a New England fishing village, were told by Mrs Bostwick that in her opinion "drugs could not have reached this country to the extent it has unless someone high up knew about it and did nothing about it. Now when people think of the Bahamas, they think of corruption."

Mrs Bostwick suggested that the PLP government work with the American government and make an attempt to combat the drug problem.

Mayaguana Situation

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 2 May 84 p 1

[Article by Marcia Bethell]

[Excerpts] Mayaguana--the most desolate southerly island in the Bahamas chain. Banished from the rest of the Bahamas and deprived of such basic necessities as communications, a proper mailboat and air service and, at times food, residents continue to stand fast in their loyalty to the Free National Movement.

Although the Inagua/Mayaguana constituency was represented by a PLP member, Joseph Ford, for 15 years, Mayaguana residents boast that they have never supported the PLP. During a weekend trip to the southern islands of Mayaguana and Inagua on FNM task force, including Shirlea representative Pierre Dupuch and Pine Ridge representative Cecil Wallace-Whitfield were told by residents:

"We would rather have a representative who wants to help but can't, than one who can help but won't."

In Inagua the FNM were assured that this FNM seat is as "safe as a porkchop in a synagogue."

Their support is staunch, their suffering almost unbearable. This is only one example of what the people must endure because of "spiteful politicians."

The residents complained that very soon Bahamasair will not be able to land on the weed-covered, rough airstrip. In its present state, a licenced pilot says its "unsafe" to land.

The airstrip and surrounding area were taken over by the Bahamas government when the United States closed its Missile Tracking station, located at Mayaguana in the late 1960's. Since then nothing has been done to improve or maintain the property.

In 1981 a drug plane was abandoned on the airstrip, without seats, and with a notice taped to the inside of the door and signed by the alleged owner stating that it is an "offence, punishable by law, to remove any property from an aircraft."

Unsuccessful attempts have been made by the Mayaguana/Inagua representative Vernon Symonette in the House of Assembly to persuade government to allocate funds to establish sanitary facilities at the airport. The terminal building, dilapidated and unkempt, is in worse condition than a cowshed. Yet Bahamasair proudly displays its sign on the rot-eaten wooden planks.

Although represented for 15 years by the chairman of the Bahamas Telecommunications' Board of Directors, the residents are still without a proper communications system. If there is an emergency on the island; if someone is injured or seriously ill, residents cannot call Nassau to arrange a charter flight for the same day. Sometimes getting a telephone call through to the capital takes several days.

As with every other Bahamian island, Mayaguana residents also complained about blatant victimization. Louise McPhee, from Pirates Well, told about how she was fired from her janitress' job at the local school because she "supports the FNM."

Hotel Hiring

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 27 Apr 84 pp 1, 10

[Article by Athena Damianos]

[Excerpt] Blue Hills MP Arthur Foulkes (FNM) today had "absolutely no doubt" that the Government-owned Balmoral Beach Hotel will only be staffed with PLP supporters when it reopens following a \$6 million facelift at the end of the year.

The Hotel Corporation of which the Prime Minister is chairman, announced today that it is necessary to make the 250 employees redundant when the hotel closes April 31 "because of the extended period required for renovations."

Chief Financial Officer/Secretary Loran Carr said that the new operators, Wyndham Hotel Company, will invite job applications later in the year. Under the lease, Wyndham will have the right to employ their own staff.

However, Mr Carr said that the Hotel Corporation "intends to recommend deserving employees to the new operators for consideration."

"I have absolutely no doubt that they intend to carry out their policy of discrimination as mentioned by the Prime Minister and carried out at the Cable Beach Hotel and Casino, resulting in the firing of Judy Mae Lewis," Mr Foulkes said.

He said that the dismissal of 250 employees constitutes a "mass firing." He said it was entirely wrong of the Corporation to dismiss the employees without any promise of rehiring them when the Balmoral reopens.

"If a private firm had attempted something like this mass firing, I can hear the PLP politicians raise the roof about the ill treatment of the workers," Mr Foulkes said.

He said the FNM will watch very closely to see what happens at the Balmoral and "we will be ready to demonstrate against this injustice."

When Mr Pindling says he's going to do something, I believe him," Mr Foulkes said. He was referring to a statement Sir Lynden made at his party's convention last year, implying that only PLP supporters would be allowed to work in the new Cable Beach Hotel and Casino and that a PLP "register of skills" would be compiled.

Sir Lynden said then that while the PLP's political opponents "made sport" of the Cable Beach project, it was only fair "that those of you who bore the heat of the day and fought for this project should share in it, work in it and protect it from the vandals who never wished it to succeed."

CSO: 3298/826

\$300-MILLION TOURIST PROJECT ADVANCES AS HOTEL LAYOFFS HIT

Hotels Study

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 26 Apr 84 p 1

[Article by Athena Damianos]

[Excerpts] The first phase of a preliminary study to locate a suitable site on which to build two hotels at Coral Harbour has been completed.

The developers, Bahamas Leisure and Resorts Ltd, a European/Middle Eastern group, have started the first phase of a \$300 million tourist project.

The work being done at Coral Harbour is preliminary and--if Government gives final approval--it will probably be some time before construction begins.

Plans to turn Coral Harbour into a fantastic \$300 million resort for wealthy Arab and European visitors were unfolded by Mr Jabbour two days before the June 10, 1982 general elections.

The development, which calls for the construction of 10 to 15 hotels over a decade, was thought to have been scrapped on several occasions. In January, Prime Minister Lynden Pindling told a national television audience that "that particular developer" was "more talk than action" and that another investor was interested in Coral Harbour.

It was generally felt that this was Sir Lynden's way of saying the project was no more, but several political observers were of the opinion that this was the Prime Minister's way of spurring the investors into "action."

The first phase of the resort project calls for the construction of two hotels and the re-development of the golf club. The two hotels are to be connected by broadwalks and will be water landscaped.

Layoff Actions

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 26 Apr 84 p 1

[Article by Marcia Bethell]

[Excerpts] About 250 employees at the Balmoral Beach Hotel will be laid off at the end of the month when the hotel closes for "renovations." Staff were told that the hotel may reopen by late December but no mention was made of them being rehired. This is the second government owned hotel to close this month.

The Lucayan Bay Hotel and Marina in Freeport will also close at the end of this month leaving about 300 persons unemployed, according to a Labour spokesman in Freeport.

Purchased by government in 1974 for \$3.5 million, the Balmoral Beach Hotel at the height of the tourist season was only 15% full. A source at the hotel said recently:

"As the money is made it goes back out in salaries. That has been the case now for over three years. The Corporation has not made any money off Balmoral, it has really just kept people employed," the source said.

Today a Labour spokesman in Freeport said that about 300 employees at the Lucayan Bay Hotel have still not been told whether they will receive any severance pay. The employees, represented by the hotel union, are reportedly "up in arms" because no union meeting has been called to deal with the situation. They are also disgruntled because they claim they were not given sufficient notice about the hotel's closure.

At the last House of Assembly meeting on April 18, Pine Ridge representative Cecil Wallace Whitfield tabled several questions to the Prime Minister about the closure of the Balmoral Beach Hotel and the Lucayan Bay Hotel and Mariner in Freeport, Grand Bahama.

Mr Whitfield also asked that the reasons for the operations closing be explained and that details be given of the numbers and categories of persons whose jobs will be terminated because of the closures.

He also asked that government say when the operations will reopen and what, if any, compensation will be paid to those employees losing their jobs or whether alternative employment is being found for the workers affected.

The Opposition chairman asked that these questions be dealt with at the next House meeting on May 9.

Earlier Firings

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 18 Apr 84 pp 1, 4

[Article by Marcia Bethell]

[Excerpt] About 100 employees at the Pilot House Hotel were fired Monday morning without prior notice. Although paid their severance salary, the employees are disgruntled because they say they were not given sufficient notice to find other employment.

G. Carroll Davidson, chairman of Condotel (Bahamas) Ltd, owners of the Pilot House, on Monday announced the signing of an agreement transferring management control of the hotel and its assets to Buena Vista Management Ltd.

It is understood that the major shareholders in Buena Vista Management Ltd are Louis Reynosa of Resorts International and Minister of Education Darrell Rolle. It was also rumoured by the dismissed Pilot House employees that Minister of Youth Kendal Nottage was also involved in the purchase of the Pilot House Hotel. However this was not confirmed.

CSO: 3298/826

FNM TORCHBEARERS REJECT PLP YOUNG LIBERALS INVITATION

Torchbearers' Position

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 11 Apr 84 pp 1, 12

[Article by Colin Higgins]

[Text] The Torchbearers Association last night voted unanimously to reject an invitation from the Progressive Young Liberals to participate in an anti-rape rally.

Tuesday's invitation from the ruling Progressive Liberal Party's youth arm was termed "a cheap political ploy" designed to trap their counterparts in the opposition Free National Movement into supporting a PLP rally or being viewed as unconcerned about the issue of rape.

Torchbearers President Melvin Grant at a press conference this afternoon said his organisation "strongly condemns those terrorists who commit the un-Godly crime of rape."

He said the Torchbearers Association "stands totally behind any non-political, community or civic-minded action by members of our society to rid us of the problem of rape.

"For this reason we have given our 100% support behind the non-partisan efforts by the Concerned Citizens for a Better Bahamas, formerly known as the Committee Against Rape, which is co-chaired by Mrs Janet Bostwick and Miss Allyson Maynard."

Mrs Bostwick is FNM Member of Parliament for Yamacraw. Miss Maynard is the daughter of Minister of Labour and Home Affairs Clement Maynard.

The organisation chaired by the two women staged a massive anti-rape march last week from Windsor Park to the Southern Recreation Grounds. A rally was held at the end of the march.

Also present at the press conference today were L. Garth Wright, FNM Secretary-General; Frank Watson, FNM Member of Parliament for Carmichael and adviser to the Torchbearers; Tommy Turnquest, activities chairman and Honorary President of the Torchbearers and other members of the youth group's executive.

"The Torchbearers Youth Association was not in any way consulted about the planning of this rally," said Mr Grant. "We were presented with a fait accompli and asked to join up on the PLP's terms."

He said the duty of Government is to "make the laws which reflect the will of society," and society's will "demands stiffer penalties for sexual offences."

The youth leader suggested that Progressive Young Liberals Chairman Trevor Whyllly "attempt to lobby the constitutional leader of the Young Liberals, Sir Lynden Oscar Pindling and the deputy leader of the Young Liberals, Mr A.D. Hanna to bring about the reforms suggested by the concerned citizens at the great march and rally against rape."

"It should be remembered," he continued, "that Mr Whyllly's leader did not even have the courtesy to attend the last House debate. And to make matters worse his deputy leader said that the debate on rape in the House of Assembly had to be deferred for two weeks because of so-called difficulties."

"The Torchbearers take note of the fact that there were no difficulties involved in the PLP spending all night debating the latest lucrative salary increases for members of Parliament, while 13 young Bahamians were locked up in jail because they dared to demonstrate against the PLP."

Former President of the Torchbearers Tommy Turnquest said it should be noted that on numerous occasions "we have invited the Progressive Young Liberals in the past to join together with us to try and combat some of the problems facing the youth today."

Young Liberals' Response

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 12 Apr 84 p 1

[Text] A release from the Progressive Young Liberals today described as "remarkable" and "regrettable" what it referred to as "the venom with which the snake has struck back at the hand of brotherhood."

It also said that Mrs Janet Bostwick should welcome rather than discourage diverse expressions of solidarity.

Yesterday the Torchbearers, youth arm of the opposition Free National Movement, rejected as a "cheap political ploy" an invitation from the Young Liberals to participate in an anti-rape march and rally next week. The non-political group, Citizens for a Better Bahamas, has planned an anti-rape march for 8:30 am Saturday. The Torchbearers have given their full support to the non-political group, led by Mrs Janet Bostwick and Miss Allyson Maynard.

Torchbearers said the invitation to the event announced by the Young Liberals, the youth branch of the PLP, was designed to trap them into supporting a PLP rally or of them being seen as unconcerned about the issue of rape.

Today's release from the Young Liberals, apparently from Chairman Traver Whyllly, said that all youth organisations were called on to participate in the Young Liberals march and rally Tuesday night.

"I extend a special invitation to the Torchbearers Association, Boys and Girls Scouts, Boys and Girls Brigades, Pathfinders, Royal Ambassadors, Junior and High School students and religious groups.

"It was therefore obvious from the diversity of the groups included in that invitation that the march was intended to be of a non-partisan, non-political flavour, embracing all youth organisations--and indeed, young Bahamians in general."

The release continued: "I was therefore surprised to read in last night's Tribune that rather than accepting our invitation the Torchbearers have decided not to participate in our march.

"They have set forth their reasons in a lengthy press release, the greater part of which is made up of the usual kind of clap-trap garbage that the public has been trained to expect from the Torchbearers," said the PLP group.

Today's release said so that the public's mind may remain focused on the issue of rape "we will exercise restraint in responding to the irrelevancies and cheap political bombast which have so gravely discoloured" the Torchbearers' statement.

CSO: 3298/827

POLITICS ENTERS ISSUE OF STIFFER PENALTIES FOR RAPE

Pindling Amendment

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 18 Apr 84 pp 1, 4

[Article by Anthony Forbes]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Sir Lynden Pindling this afternoon introduced in the House of Assembly for the first reading a bill for an act to amend the Penal Code to introduce harsher penalties for sexual offences and to abolish corporal punishment.

But the Official Opposition Free National Movement members defeated a motion moved by the Prime Minister for the second and third reading and passage of the amendmenets in one sitting because of the controversial nature of the bill.

In tabling the amendments, the Prime Minister told members that the bill addresses the points referred to in a petition by the Women's Crisis Centre and the Business and Professional Women's Association presented to the House two weeks ago.

But the Prime Minister said that the bill does not contain one of the recommendations of the petition signed by over 7,000 persons urging closed court sessions for rape trials.

House members agreed unanimously to go back on the agenda to Item 19 dealing with the first reading of bills to allow the Prime Minister to introduce the amendments to the Penal Code.

The Prime Minister's tabling of the bill follows an alarming increase in rape this year and the recent public outcry against the crime, including demonstrations and rallies to get the Government to deal immediately with the problem.

With the public gallery crowded with women, the Prime Minister told House members that the Government feels that there is good and just cause in this instance to consider the question of stiffer penalties for rape and other sexual offences.

The Prime Minister also noted that it had been widely, deliberately and dishonestly misrepresented in the newspapers that there was a matter before the House for consideration relating to changes in the rape laws, but denied that it was so.

He said that the bill he introduced will place before the House a series of amendments which, if agreed, will change the rape laws.

He then noted that a petition from the Women's Crisis Centre and the Business and Professional Women's Association was given to him two weeks ago by Dr Norman Gay, MP for Bain Town.

FNM Objections

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 18 Apr 84 pp 1, 4

[Article by Anthony Forbes]

[Excerpt]

THE Official Opposition Free National Movement this afternoon defeated an attempt by Government to debate and pass in one sitting amendments to the Penal Code, which would not only provide more severe penalties for sexual offences, but would abolish the cat o'nine tails that many persons want extended to include the offence of rape. Although the Opposition had agreed to the amendments being introduced and read, Leader of the Opposition Kendal Isaacs only received a copy of the proposed amendments this morning.

Mr Isaacs told the House that such a move by Government would have been in order if the bill had not been controversial and if the opposition had had time to study it.

Mr Isaacs said that if the bill was substantially in accordance with a resolution by FNM Yamacraw MP Mrs Janet Bostwick seeking stiffer penalties for sexual offences, including corporal punishment, the Opposition might have been induced to agree with Government moving in that way.

The FNM Leader was replying to Government's attempts to introduce and take through all three stages, its bill for an act to amend the Penal Code and to effect certain related amendments to other laws, in one sitting of parliament.

The Official Opposition members agreed for the first reading, but voted against Government moving for the second reading and committal, third reading and passing of the amendments. To do this Government needed the unanimous consent of the House.

Cleric's Castigation of Government

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 18 Apr 84 pp 1, 4

[Article by Colin Higgins]

[Excerpt] Rev Simeon Hall told young people at an anti-rape rally last night he was greatly disappointed that Government did not respond to the voice of the thousands who marked April 3 on the eve of the opening of the House of Assembly.

"I was disappointed and dismayed because they did not respond in any kind of way.

"A response would have been a clear message to the criminal element that the whole society is about to take action," the minister said to applause.

"And if the Government decides not to respond then young and old, Young Liberals and Torchbearers and whoever you have, should combine the forces and hit the streets again, not Over-the-Hill but in the front of Parliament and let everybody know that we're tired!"

Last night's event, organised by the Young People's Committee Against Rape, began with a march from Windsor Park to the Southern Recreation Grounds led by the Boys Brigade Marching Band.

Attack on Government Maneuver

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 18 Apr 84 p 1

[Article by Athena Damianos]

[Excerpt] Yamacraw MP Janet Bostwick yesterday challenged Government to explain how they could be against corporal punishment without condemning "the ultimate taking away of life" capital punishment.

The Opposition MP said that the Prime Minister's proposal to abolish corporal punishment altogether when there is an increase in the gravity of crime, was a "slap in the face" to thousands upon thousands of people.

"Today I was shocked to find out that Government intends to remove corporal punishment from the books altogether," she said.

Mrs Bostwick was moving her Resolution for stiffer rape penalties, including the award of the cat o'nine tails for convicted rapists, in the discretion of the courts. Her one hour address, which will be broadcast over ZNS radio, drew loud applause from women who filled the gallery and desk-thumping from her political colleagues.

Just before Mrs Bostwick rose to speak, the Speaker of the House informed Members that due to the gravity of the matter, the debate would be aired over radio. He said the Prime Minister would get unlimited air time, Mrs Bostwick and the Leader of the Opposition would each have an hour, Ministers, 30 minutes, and 15 minutes for Members.

The Prime Minister was not on the Floor when Mrs Bostwick spoke. Labour and Home Affairs Minister Clement Maynard, who supports corporal punishment was absent from Parliament yesterday.

"Why, why, when we are experiencing--I wouldn't say the greatest increase in crime--but an increase in the gravity of crime, (is Government taking steps) that can be construed by those who perpetuate the crime as almost an endorsement of their actions?" Mrs Bostwick wanted to know.

She called on Government to explain how it could want to abolish corporal punishment when nothing was being done to remove "the ultimate taking of life"--capital punishment--from the books.

She also wanted Government to explain why it issued a report to public school principals to "tan the hide" off young people who needed to be punished, but it didn't want convicted rapists to receive the cat.

Bostwick Condemnation

Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 18 Apr 84 p 1

[Article by Anthony Forbes]

[Excerpt] Opposition Blue Hills MP Arthur Foulkes told House members last night that he was "astonished" to see Government trying to "sneak" into parliament sweeping and liberal changes in the rape laws at a time when the crime is raging in the country and Bahamians are crying out for harsher penalties for the offence.

"If we do not adopt radical measures to suit this radical situation, the time may come when we may need a curfew to protect our people, which is a more radical move," the Free National Movement parliamentarian declared in support of a resolution by Yamacraw MP Mrs Janet Bostwick asking for corporal punishment for rapists.

CSO: 3298/828

BRIEFS

POLICE OFFICIAL--Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police Dudley Hanna was confirmed in that post Thursday, four years after he was appointed to that position, Commissioner of Police Gerald Bartlett confirmed today. "That is correct," the Commissioner said when asked whether a report that Mr Hanna had been confirmed as Deputy Commissioner was true. Mr Hanna, who was awarded the Queen's Police Medal in April, 1976, has been Acting Deputy Commissioner since 1980. Before that, Mr Hanna served a lengthy stint as Commander of the Uniform Branch of the New Providence District and a brief tenure as head of the Grand Bahama Division of the force. Mr Hanna also took a police course in the United Kingdom in 1976. The lengthy delays in confirming officers in positions to which they have been appointed to act was criticised by at least two retired police officers when they gave evidence recently before the Royal Commission of Inquiry. The length of time Mr Hanna has been acting as deputy commissioner without confirmation was commented on by former Assistant Commissioner of Police Paul Thompson when he gave his evidence. [Text] [Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English 27 Apr 84 p 1]

CSO: 3298/828

ARGENTINE DELEGATION SIGNS TRADE AGREEMENT

Havana GRANMA WEEKLY REVIEW in English 25 Mar 84 p 3

[Text]

● HAVANA (AIN). — Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, member of the Political Bureau and vice-president of the Councils of State and of Ministers, met with Argentine Trade Secretary Ricardo Campero, heading a delegation from his country to Cuba.

They discussed the results of the economic and trade mission headed by Campero and stressed the importance of this meeting and the outlook opening up for Cuban-Argentine trade. This was reflected in the various talks held by members of the Argentine delegation with top officials of the Cuban government.

Campero expressed his satisfaction over the visit and the agreements which had been signed.

They also discussed relations with Latin America, the world economic and financial situation, and other matters of mutual interest.

At the meeting were the Argentine secretaries of industry and maritime resources, Ernesto Weinschelbaum and Héctor R. Traverso; Norberto Imbelloni, a national deputy; and the Argentine ambassador to Cuba, Luis Raúl Clarasó de la Vega.

Cuba was represented by Foreign Trade Minister Ricardo Cabrisas; Amadeo Blanco and Aldo Margolles, deputy ministers of foreign trade and the fishing industry; and Luis Gutiérrez, adviser to the vice-president.

THE AGREEMENTS

Argentina and Cuba signed several agreements on foreign trade, finance, fishing, technical co-operation and relations between the Chambers of Commerce, as a result of talks held during the 3rd meeting of the foreign trade working group.

Ricardo Cabrisas said the talks had been held in a frank spirit of solidarity, characteristic of relations between the two countries, and expressed satisfaction because an understanding had been reached quickly.

He noted that aspects of technological co-operation had been included in the agreements which had been signed as a valuable contribution to closer Cuban-Argentine ties.

Ricardo Campero was of the opinion that the terms of the agreement are satisfactory and that a new egalitarian relationship had been worked out between the two countries for their mutual benefit.

The level of technological cooperation is substantial in terms of the development of Cuba and Argentina, he commented, and it opens up possibilities for trade with third countries.

CSO: 3200/26

BRIEFS

LABOR ACCORD WITH GUYANA--A mutual cooperation agreement in the field of labor was signed in Havana on March 30 by Kenneth W.E. Denny, minister of manpower and cooperatives of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, and Joaquin Benavides, minister-president of the State Committee for Labor and Social Security of Cuba. The Guyanese minister, in a brief statement to the press, described his visit as very productive because he learned of Cuba's experiences dealing with the organization of work, salaries, social security and safety and health measures for workers. Accompanying Minister Denny in his visit to Cuba were Rupert Ramawad, of the ruling People's National Congress party; Zamer Majid, deputy chief of labor relations; Maurice Edghill, head of co-operative development; and Neberne Scott, deputy chief of social security. Ambassadors Cecil Pilgrim and Lazaro Cabezas, of Guyana and Cuba, respectively, also met with the visiting delegation. [Text] [Havana GRANMA WEEKLY REVIEW in English 8 Apr 84 p 1]

CSO: 3200/26

BLANCO DEFENDS ECONOMIC POLICY, IMPLICATES PR IN RIOTS

Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish 26 Apr 84 p 7

[Speech by Dominican President Jorge Salvador Blanco, broadcast from the National Palace on radio and television on 25 April]

[Text] President Jorge Salvador Blanco last night gave the country a rundown of the serious developments that have taken place in the country in recent hours, announced that the government is in complete control of the situation and asked the Dominican people to have confidence and faith in the government.

Blanco also reiterated that the prices of several staple goods that the government has frozen would remain so.

The chief executive spoke to the country over radio and television from the National Palace during the meeting of the Expanded Council of Government.

The complete text of his address follows:

The 24th of April is a day to build the republic's democratic, constitutional order, with its civilian, republican, democratic and representative government. Evil in thought and, worse yet, in action is being committed by those who seek to use 24 April to destroy or damage the democratic constitutional order that I head as president of the Dominican Republic and supreme commander of the Armed Forces and the National Police, embodying the sovereign will of the people as voiced at the elections on 16 August 1982; this administration will conclude its mandate on 16 August 1986.

The Dominican people have a well-developed constitutional sense, as do the great majority of peoples on the American continent. We, however, possess certain distinctive features that highlight our devotion to constitutionalism, so much so that we Dominicans were constitutionalists even before the nation was born as such on 27 February 1844.

History eloquently confirms this assertion, whether we take the Declaration of Independence of 1 December 1821 or, later when the independence movement was in full ferment, the manifesto of 16 January 1844, which sets forth the constitutional guidelines of the future Dominican State.

We Dominicans are by nature constitutionalists; we believe in the democratic legal system that is based on our constitution. Even during the bleakest moments of our institutional history, when the constitution was a completely pro-forma document that provided no safeguards for the country's legal, economic and social order, our country's constitutional sense has been latent in the civic consciousness, fostering action to create, reestablish or strengthen a legal and constitutional order, never to destroy it. Speaking of strengthening it, I remember how after 19 November 1961 the patriotic or political groups issued a communique to strengthen the fragile constitutional regime then symbolized by Dr Balaguer.

24 April 1965 was in keeping with our people's constitutional sense. This is the opposite of perverting or corrupting it. In other words, 24 April is a date on which to reestablish our country's republican, democratic and representative constitutional order. It is a day to create, to build, not to destroy. On 23 April of this year actions were undertaken that run counter to the meaning of that date. The solidly established constitutional order that I represent was conspired against. Today, 24 April, an attempt is being made to make me, who struggled on 24 April 1965 to reestablish the lost constitutional order and who exerted all of my negotiating skills while others walked on foreign beaches, reverse the struggle for civilian, constitutional government that I am waging alongside the people.

The paradoxes of fate and our history!

To better understand the magnitude of the violence, looting, property destruction, bloodshed and death, I am going to summarize what happened in the city of Santo Domingo and in the rest of the country on the 23rd and 24th and up to noon this Wednesday the 25th.

The violence was not at all spontaneous. It was systematic and, at the same time, the result of coordinated efforts by the members of one faction of the Reformist Party that has links to former military officers and activists and leaders of segments of the Far Left in our country.

The latter have been training for this purpose. You will recall my reports and warnings to the editors of newspapers and the owners and managers of radio stations in August 1983 to the effect that State security services had detected indoctrination courses in schools with remnants of urban and rural guerrilla training, courses that clearly indicated intent to disrupt our republic's constitutional and democratic order. This was the purpose of the strikes that were staged in various towns in the interior of the country, even though no group emerged

to claim responsibility for them, inasmuch as they wanted to convey the impression that the strikes were spontaneous acts of protest. The government, however, was fully aware that they were the prelude to the incidents of the 23rd. Unfortunately, these reports were not given sufficient credibility. Some press circles even thought that it was a government ploy to divert the public's attention. What these media circles failed to understand was that the evidence supporting information involving State security has its own value, regardless of whether it convinces a jury, especially in the case of a conspiracy, which is difficult to prove in a criminal proceeding, and that in such cases warning and persuasion are to be preferred.

In reading the papers over the past 3 days we have often seen acknowledgements that the violence was the work of an organization that had flawlessly planned its logistics and movements and whose methods "spread like wildfire."

Thus, the violence was planned and carried out with all of the fury of the aforementioned political groups, which are responsible for the incidents that have culminated in the death of innocent people and the destruction and looting of property. In this vein I must make specific mention of the fire that was deliberately started yesterday in the Guaigui pine forest, which has so far destroyed thousands of acres of pinetrees. This and the severe drought are hindering the forestation efforts that the government is making at several levels, including legislation, inasmuch as the Forestry Development Incentive Bill is now before the Senate. This case of arson is a serious attack on the country itself, because without forests we have no rain, and without rain we have no rivers, and without rivers we have no dams, and without water no country can develop.

The burning of cane fields is another serious assault on the national economy. What a shame for our workers, who were anxiously awaiting a successful harvest to meet their many needs! They should be the first to defend our natural resources against these latter-day Neros.

Blocking roads and bridges has been another widespread criminal activity. In fact, by the time that law enforcement agencies got to a farm owned by the Ornes Coiscou brothers this morning, it was too late; it had burned down, along with the livestock.

The burning of modest Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) offices that were erected with the resources of PRD members themselves reveals the political motivation behind this conspiracy of violence directed against both the government and the PRD, which will stand together against the arsonist's torch and pursue our common destiny.

I have never been an apologist for nor an admirer of violence. Quite to the contrary, both publicly and privately I have always advocated nonviolent, thoughtful and humane treatment of others and rejected

the various manifestations of violence. I must acknowledge the composure that the Armed Forces and the National Police demonstrated in dealing with the serious incidents of the past few days; it reveals their professionalism, their humanity, their respect for life. The price of maintaining law and order and safeguarding the physical integrity and property of our citizens is sometimes human life itself, as it is impossible to differentiate between the innocent, the guilty, criminals and conspirators. The Armed Forces had to intervene opportunely to help the National Police counter the aggression, the looting and the chaos that threatened to take hold of certain urban areas. The violence was among the worst since 1961. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge the performance of our Armed Forces and National Police, which in countering the attacks on our citizens, in defending themselves and in protecting public and private property that was being looted and burned, reacted in a reasonable and prudent manner, demonstrating their excellent training for coping with organized violence in this city and elsewhere in the country.

I want to take this opportunity to talk again about certain aspects of our economic situation.

Our economic crisis is a crisis of causes, not of effects. Hence, we must do something about the causes to straighten out our economy.

As I stated in my inaugural speech on 16 August 1982: "The crisis that we suffering will be overcome with the great efforts and the sacrifice of all Dominicans, especially the more affluent classes."

Later in the same speech I pointed out: "The time has come for the Dominicans who are well-off to pay taxes to the nation."

On that occasion I submitted to the National Congress certain bills establishing taxes exclusively on affluent groups.

One bill set a percentage ceiling on income tax exemptions for reinvestment and other reasons, and another called for increases in the income tax in certain categories.

In submitting these bills on 16 August 1982, I stated: "We are submitting two bills that close income tax loopholes for the affluent": a capital gains tax and an urban real estate tax.

I concluded my announcement of the new tax policy on 16 August 1982 by stating: "As you can see, none of the proposed taxes is levied on the country's poor."

On that same day, I banned more than \$100 million worth of imported goods consumed primarily by the country's most affluent groups.

The agreement with the International Monetary Fund benefits the following low-income segments of the population: peasant farmers who grow coffee,

cacao or tobacco, blue-collar workers and tenant farmers in the sugar industry, and blue-collar workers in industrial free zones.

Moreover, the Price Stabilization Institute has subsidy programs for five staple items, and sales of low-cost goods are being expanded.

This has also been the first administration to bring large exporters to court for not surrendering foreign exchange. We are not going to give an inch in this policy, which I charted on 16 August 1982.

I will state again that with the subsidies established under the agreement with the IMF, the Price Stabilization Institute will keep the prices of the basic items in the Dominican diet, such as chicken, eggs, pasta and milk, at their current levels. There will be no increases. The price of canned pasta will remain the same. The market price of the reconstituted milk that the Price Stabilization Institute sells will be maintained.

Under our guidelines, the General Directorate of Price Control has strengthened both its organization and its operations to do a better job of protecting low-income families. In this regard, it has redefined its working policy, focusing separately on business, distribution channels and the consumer.

In this same vein, businessmen have been asked to accept the challenge and the sacrifice of pegging their profits at acceptable levels for their companies' continued operation while the economic situation settles down. Shopowners have also been asked to show restraint, given that their sole source of extra income is their customers, who are currently in a tight spot because of their low wages.

Finally, the Department of Consumer Education has expanded its efforts to develop more practical consumer awareness programs so that shoppers can distinguish between stores that profiteer and those that clearly exhibit and observe official price lists, as well as to show families the variety of dishes that are easy to prepare with the least expensive items available in local markets.

This is not all, however. As I pointed out before, operations have been substantially expanded by increasing the number of agents nationwide, thus broadening enforcement. It is an unfortunate fact that in times of crisis such as these unscrupulous people always seek to augment their profits at the expense of others. As evidence of what I have just stated, the Price Control Directorate has taken to court over the past 60 days 2,778 businessmen, including manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers. The courts are the ones that must punish profiteers and speculators. The drastic measures taken against regular violators could serve as an example so that others will run their businesses ethically, which is more necessary than ever in these times of economic troubles.

In another vein, for several years now the Dominican sugar industry has been suffering the effects of very low world prices, while its costs have been rising, including the cost of imported machinery and equipment, as well as fertilizers.

For this reason the industry has been operating at a loss or at a very low profit. For example, the State Sugar Council recorded losses of \$85.7 million in the 1981/1982 harvest and \$56.5 million in the 1982/1983 harvest.

This prompted a drop in production and deterioration of the sugar mill installations and of the cane fields; it also made it impossible for the industry's workers to share in profits because there were none. To do something about this situation, which is detrimental to the country, to the industry and to its workers and farmers, the National Concentration Government, through the recent resolutions of the Monetary Board, granted a 48 percent exchange rate discount to the sugar industry so that with this additional income in Dominican pesos it can at least offset the higher industrial prices of recent years, which will also benefit the sugar planters and the self-sacrificing cane workers.

The discount of 48 cents on the dollar is not discriminatory in the sense that it is greater for the sugar industry than for other exports. Rather, it is applied across the board to all traditional exports, that is to say, coffee, cacao, tobacco and mining, promoting both government exporters, such as the State Sugar Council, Rosario Dominicana and the Dominican Airline Company, and private exporting firms.

Government exports account for 46 percent of the total value of the traditional exports that benefit from the 48 percent discount. Moreover, concurrent with the 48 percent incentive, the General Directorate of the Income Tax announced that the proceeds from the discount would be regarded as regular income and, therefore, subject to the income tax; thus, the government indirectly receives part of the incentive proceeds as revenue as well.

This incentive is granted only to those exporters who religiously fulfill their obligation to hand in all foreign exchange to the Central Bank. Moreover, so that not only the sugar industry planters and workers benefit from the incentive, steps have been taken to boost the prices that Dominican peasant farmers receive for their coffee, cacao and tobacco.

Moreover, shortly after the regular session of the legislature began on 27 February of this year, I appeared before the National Assembly and submitted to the Senate a bill boosting the wages of public servants and private sector white- and blue-collar workers. The bill will not apply to employees who receive wages above the minimum indicated in it. There are four tax laws underlying this bill to provide the government with additional revenue to pay the higher wages of civil

servants. First, the law that cuts tax breaks to 50 percent; second, the law that increases the presumptive profit of insurance companies to 25 percent; third, the law that establishes a new tax on the domestic production of alcoholic beverages, and fourth, the law that establishes a capital gains tax for real estate transactions. It is obvious that these laws do not affect the country's poor or low-income classes.

On that memorable day and with sufficient lead time, I submitted the bill boosting wages because for some months I had felt, and had so indicated even at meetings with the labor organizations themselves, that a wage increase was necessary, in keeping with the government's ability to afford one, so that people could cope with the country's economic realities. Unfortunately, no action has been taken. The aforementioned bill and the laws on which it is based have not yet even been placed on the agenda of the Senate. Needless to say, a wage increase is an essentially legislative matter, and the Executive Branch cannot make any changes through the civil service system. In other words, the president of the republic cannot decree such a measure.

Because of its democracy and the peace in which its people live, our country is an example to Latin America and the world. We are a powerful magnet to the world outside of our republic. The government is in complete control of the situation and continues to provide its range of services. But it is not enough for the government to be strong, as it is, respectful of our freedoms and determined to remedy our painful economic woes. Through their political, religious, professional, labor, peasant, cultural and charitable organizations, the people must react with a loud shout of "No to violence" as Mahatma Gandhi did in forging India's independence. Our independence is not at stake here and now. No. What is at stake here is the peaceful and democratic character of our people. I welcome the proposal of our archbishop, Monsignor Nicolas de Jesus Lopez Rodriguez, that together we come to grips with the economic crisis besetting the republic.

Our citizens must remain calm and aware of their responsibilities, with the complete assurance that they can count on all of the guarantees that the government I head provides them. The nation can rest assured that the constitutional mandate that concludes on 16 August 1986 will be inexorably fulfilled. We will spare no effort to see to it that the people's contributions to this exemplary democracy are not abridged or diminished. Quite to the contrary, we will consolidate all of the attitudes and actions that enhance the Dominican Republic's democracy.

Those responsible for the loss of lives and the irreparable property damage will have the full weight of the law brought against them.

The man speaking to you will never waver or vacillate in discharging all of the responsibilities that the exercise of power dictates.

Those who harbor the hope of bending the course of our history are fooling themselves.

I strongly urge the entire country to maintain confidence in our government and to make common cause in asserting with our actions the peaceful nature of our democracy, which is continually nourished by the undying philosophy of Juan Pablo Duarte.

Thank you very much.

8743

CSO: 3248/638

GCSP'S MCDAVID COMMENTS ON BOYCOTT BY PEACE COUNCIL

Results of GCSP Congress

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 28 Apr 84 p 1

[Text] The recently concluded GCSP Congress has created a sound basis for support and solidarity to the Progressive Governments and Forces of Latin America and the Caribbean, GCSO President Elvin McDavid reported Thursday.

Speaking during a Press conference at the GCSP Office in Queenstown about the outcome of the Peace Congress, Cde McDavid announced that the GCSP has received a number of invitations to attend similar meetings in Spain, Nicaragua and Ecuador.

Guyana, he said, is to be represented by a two-man team headed by Assistant Political Adviser to the President, Halim Majeed, at a Conference on Problems of Central America and Nicaragua scheduled to be held in Lisbon from May 3 to 6.

The GCSP Congress, Cde Majeed noted, has served as the basis for a Regional Peace Movement.

And, in a Press statement, Cde McDavid observed that it was with regret that the Guyana Peace Council did not participate in the meeting.

While its presence neither detracted from, nor diminished the importance and significance of the Congress, the GCSP would have welcomed a GPC delegation, he said in the statement.

This would have buttressed the unity of the peace so urgently needed in the face of the imperialist onslaught in the Region, the statement continued.

However, he said a Joint Commission for Co-operation between the GCSP and the GPC has been proposed and a reply is being awaited from GPC.

According to Cde McDavid, the GCSP Congress gave a signal rebuff to those forces which continue to pose a threat to peace in the Region.

He also announced that the GCSP will shortly make a statement on the present "Ocean Venture 84" military manoeuvres being conducted by the US military in the Region.

The GCSP Congress and its attendant activities involved delegates and observers from the GCSP's 33 affiliates and 44 overseas representatives from 24 overseas organisations, including the World Peace Council.--(GNA)

Delegates' Impressions

Georgetown NEW NATION in English 22 Apr 84 p 8

[Text] There have been repeated statements to the effect that Guyanese were a starving people, who, if given the least opportunity, would leave for another country where things "are so much better."

Such statements have been published in some Caribbean media and there have been people who believe them although they can readily obtain foods produced in Guyana on their shelves.

However, there is the saying "seeing is believing" and many visitors to this country get an opportunity to see the extent of our food production.

Delegates to the recent 100th anniversary conference of the Guyana Teachers' Association and to the congress of the Guyana Committee for Solidarity and Peace will be leaving this country with the knowledge that Guyana has an abundance of food.

Leader of the delegation from the Caribbean Union of Teachers, following a visit to Parika, could not imagine that there could be reports that food is almost non-existent in Guyana.

The numerous bunches of plantains, the stalls packed with fresh vegetables and fruits told him a story and have led him to become an ambassador of Guyana to contradict statements to the effect that there is no food in Guyana.

He was not singular. Delegates from Grenada, St Vincent and some other Caribbean islands will leave these shores with a different impression.

CSO: 3298/829

RALLY NOTES PROGRESS IN GUYANA RELATIONSHIP WITH CUBA

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 27 Apr 84 p 4

[Text] Guyana's Ambassador to Cuba, Cecil Pilgrim, on Wednesday night told a rally at Bishops' High School that the relationship between Cuba and Guyana was friendly and fraternal and expressed the belief that these ties of friendship would continue to be strong.

The rally, organised by the Guyana Committee for Solidarity and Peace in conjunction with the Guyana-Cuba Friendship and Solidarity Organisation, was held on the occasion of the 23rd anniversary of the counter-revolutionary forces at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs).

The Ambassador, addressing a gathering of more than 300 Cubans and Guyanese, said that since the two countries had formed ties eleven years ago, relations had moved positively forward. Since then, he said, Guyana had not looked back.

He spoke of the practical programmes in Guyana which were being carried out by Cuba and noted that the most significant contribution was made in the field of education. Minister of Manpower and Cooperatives, Kenneth Denny, who gave the feature address at the rally, said that Guyanese have much in common with the Cuban people.

The Minister stated that the victory of the Cuban people at the Bay of Pigs was a gesture to the world that a small country could defeat a powerful army. He said: "Some of us in Guyana are often worried about our limited resources" and declared that the Cuban victory teaches that the will and unity of a people, however small, will surmount the odds.

The (Playa Giron) victory, he said, was an experience from which Guyanese could learn. The Minister stated that proper leadership was important to motivate people at the time of struggle, commending the dynamic leadership of Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro at the Bay of Pigs invasion.

The defeat suffered by the United States at the Bay of Pigs, he said, was the first defeat of US imperialism in Latin America.

Consul Daniel Noa Monzon of the Cuban Embassy in Guyana addressed the rally on the significance of the occasion. He expressed his appreciation to the committees who gave recognition to the anniversary. The Consul declared that the victory at the Bay of Pigs was not only that of Cuba but of all oppressed people. He praised the unity of the Cubans at the time of revolution and said that the comrades who died will never be forgotten.

The programme was marked by musical renditions by Francisco Rodriguez and Adia Gell from the Cuban Embassy. A poem was read by GBC Programme Director Vibert Cambridge. [Narmala Shewcharan]

CSO: 3298/829

JAGAN EXPLAINS REASONS FOR NOT ATTENDING TUC RALLY

Georgetown MIRROR in English 22 Apr 84 p 1

[Text] May Day is not an occasion for workers to march arm-in-arm with the oppressors. 'It is a day to call a spade a spade, to attack imperialism and the PNC ruling clique, to defend the workers' living standards.'

So said Guyanese Marxist leader Dr Cheddi Jagan when he declined an invitation from the TUC to speak at a May Day Rally in Georgetown in his capacity as Hon President of the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union, the country's single largest labour body.

In a letter to Joseph Pollydore, the TUC's General Secretary, Dr Jagan stated that 'it will not be possible' for him to attend.

The last time Dr Jagan, who is also leader of Guyana's majority party, the People's Progressive Party, appeared at a TUC-sponsored May Day Rally was in 1979. He recalled to Pollydore that at that occasion the ruling PNC stage-managed the Rally which was held at the National Park.

Police had crudely removed genuine workers from the tarmac near the speaker's rostrum and allowed hooligan elements of the PNC close to the microphones from where they incessantly heckled non-government speakers who were championing the rights of workers.

Dr Jagan reminded Pollydore that the PNC hecklers shouted down a resolution for the payment of \$14-a-day minimum wage. That caused Pollydore to shout: 'The workers will decide!'

Since then, the PPP General Secretary pointed out, despite the escalating cost of living and the many TUC reports proposing a wage and salary structures the TUC has publicly failed to defend the rights of the workers against a blatant anti-working class government. These wage structures are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Daily</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
1980	\$25.16	\$654.23
1981	29.68	772.11
1982	35.34	918.81
1983	38.01	988.30

The wages issue apart, the TUC has failed to give muscle to its resolution unanimously voted for by worker's representatives, for the government to re-import essential foods, including wheat flour and split peas.

The letter went on to state that the TUC again remained mum when the government railroaded an anti-labour Bill through the National Assembly, not only over-ruling the decisions of the High Court and Court of Appeal but also making legal the non-payment by the government of \$14 as stipulated in the government/TUC 1977-1979 agreement.

'No doubt because of the accommodationist role of the TUC--its apparent ability to accept abjectly and supinely all the anti-working class blows from the PNC--the government did not even bother to consult it. Such is the degree of contempt in which it holds the TUC,' Dr Jagan declared.

He concluded thus:

'May Day is a day of celebration for the workers to pay tribute to their fallen heroes and to resolve to struggle in unity against their oppressors. It is not a day for workers to collaborate with an anti-working class government and march the streets arm-in-arm with their oppressors. It is a day to call a spade a spade, to attack imperialism and the PNC ruling clique to defend the workers' living standards, which have been eroding over several years, and to reiterate the TUC's 1978 Special Conference resolution for a political solution to the grave economic social and political crisis gripping the country.'

This is not the first time the TUC found itself abandoned at May Day. Last year, major unions including GAWU, NAACIE and CCWU did not march with the TUC out of sheer disgust with the way the umbrella labour federation of some 28 affiliates allows itself to be manipulated by the ruling party. To conceal its nakedness the TUC usually hangs on to the PNC which provides a throng mainly of non workers, House of Israel cultists, military and militiamen in [word illegible] and coerced public servants for the marches.

CSO: 3298/829

UNION ACTIVITIES REPORTED; SUIT FILED AGAINST NEW BILL

Call for Worker Marches

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 20 Apr 84 p 1

[Text] Organising Secretary of the Guyana Trades Union Congress Cde Kenneth Denny has appealed to the management at various work places to encourage their employees to march under the banner of their union.

In cases where there is no union, the workers could march under the banner of their institution, the Minister of Manpower and Cooperatives said.

Workers and members of various organisations taking part in the parade will assemble at five points of the City and parade through the streets of Georgetown on their way to the rally at the National Park.

The assembly points are D'Urban and Smyth streets; in front of East La Penitence Police Station; Bel Air and Sussex streets, Albouystown; Garnett and Sheriff streets, Campbellville; and Independence Park.

Red shirts and white trousers have been maintained as the standard mode of dress, though workers who do not have these may wear other colours, the spokesman said.

TUC Role on Wages

Georgetown SUNDAY CHRONICLE in English 22 Apr 84 pp 12, 13

[Text] The Government is now waiting on the Guyana Trades Union Congress to indicate when that body will be available to continue talks on wages for workers in the Public Sector.

Government and the TUC met on Thursday last after the two parties had studied the recommendations of the special six-man committee which was set up by the Government after meaningful consultations with the TUC.

A number of trade unions, not represented on the Executive Council of the TUC had been asked to comment on the recommendations.

Cde Carl Greenidge, Minister of Finance headed the Government's team at Thursday's meeting. The other members included Cde Kenneth Denny, Minister of Manpower and Co-operatives, Cde Haslyn Paris, Chairman of the Board of the State Planning Commission, Cde Donald Augustin, Secretary to the Treasury. The TUC team was led by President Samuel Walker and included Cde Joseph Pollydore, Secretary.

Government Call for 'Understanding'

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 27 Apr 84 p 5

[Text] Minister of Manpower and Co-operatives Kenneth Denny said Wednesday there is a need for trade unions to understand Government's programmes.

Such an understanding by the unions would benefit the nation as a whole, he told a symposium at Dorothy Bayley Health Clinic, South Road. The symposium, part of the programme to mark Critchlow Week, was organised by the Guyana Local Government Officers' Association whose President, Cde Samuel Thorne, was chairman.

Other panelists included General Secretary of the Guyana Trades Union Congress, Joseph Pollydore and Principal Assistant Secretary Leslie Melville.

Cde Pollydore lamented the fact that whenever young people were identified for leadership positions in the trade union movement, such persons left the country for one reason or another.

He added this to the reasons why the movement is "not now at full strength." According to Cde Melville, there are a number of persons who prefer not to become involved in the trade union movement because they lacked courage.

In picture (from left) are Cde Thorne, Cde Pollydore, Cde Melville [speaking] and Minister Denny]

Union Court Action

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 28 Apr 84 p 8

[Text] Three trade unionists have filed originating summonses against the Attorney-General claiming declarations from the Court that the Labour (Amendment) Act, 1984, is colourable legislation, fraudulent and invalid.

The plaintiffs, Mohamed Alli, Durbal Budhai and Roopnauth Dhursan of the National Association of Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Employees (NAACIE) are also contending that the Act purports to fix wages for a period which cannot be enforced by workers.

They also want the Court to declare that the 1977 Collective Labour Agreement between the Government and executive members of the Guyana T.U.C. was, at the date of the said agreement, and at all material times, a voluntary Collective Agreement.

And, as such, it cannot, in whole or in part, be made legally binding under the Labour (Amendment) Act 1984 or at all, cannot directly or indirectly, be used to prescribe wages rates as the Labour (Amendment) Act 1984 purports to do.

CSO: 3298/830

REPORT ON BBC INTERVIEW WITH JAGAN, FR MORRISON

Georgetown CATHOLIC STANDARD in English 22 Apr 84 p 3

[Text] Catholic Standard Editor, Fr Andrew Morrison, presently on leave, and Dr Cheddi Jagan were among a number of prominent West Indian citizens featured in a three part series on the BBC entitled "Caribbean at the Cross Roads."

The producer of the programme, Mr Benny Amar, visited the Caribbean in March and interviewed among others, Tom Adams of Barbados, Micheal Manley and Edward Seaga of Jamaica and George Chambers of Trinidad.

Mr Amar stated on the programme "my repeated requests for an interview with Mr Burnham came to nothing."

In response to the BBC's questions Fr Morrison said: "People are suffering, (in Guyana) there is malnutrition...which the government strenuously denies. People do not have enough food."

"The problem," he explained, "is mismanagement, mainly, and lack of motivation."

Asked about the racial divisions in the country Fr Morrison said, "The division between Africans and Indians that we have today has been exacerbated by our politicians for their own ends.

"This has kept our people apart."

He further explained, "One of the threats that Walter Rodney posed to this government and to the two major parties was that he was pushing very hard for the coming together of the two races and he was succeeding to a large extent.

"He was a threat and therefore had to go. As you know he was assassinated."

The commentator described Rodney as "an alternative to Mr Burnham because he was black."

Dr Jagan, speaking on the race question said, "There is and there was a racial problem very acute in this country when the CIA intervened in the 60's.

"The Burnham government," he went on, "for nearly 14-15 years carried out a practice of dividing the working class through racial and political discrimination."

Accusing the government of introducing "fraud and force in elections," Dr Jagan went on, "We see a distinct possibility of a showdown in the near future, either a negotiated settlement or a resort to means other than elections to reign in this country--since "the ruling party has closed the door to elections."

The BBC commentator, Mr Amar, summed up "Guyana's economy as far as I could see for myself and from what all the experts told me, was little short of disastrous.

"This chaotic economic situation and the absence of any prospect of a change of government through elections paints a grim future for Guyana and its people," he concluded.

CSO: 3298/831

LONG-TIME PPP MEMBER OUT; MANNER OF LEAVING IN DISPUTE

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 28 Apr 84 p 8

[Text] Long-serving; member of the Minority People's Progressive Party (PPP), Harold Snagg, said yesterday he has resigned from that Party.

However, in a Press statement yesterday, the PPP said Snagg has been expelled from the Party and dismissed as a Party Organiser.

In his letter of resignation, a copy of which was made available to the Chronicle, Snagg, also known as David Doobay, said he was resigning "in view of certain developments and attitudes presently existing within the PPP."

He said he found it somewhat difficult to continue membership within the PPP. "In the circumstances I hereby resign as a member of the Party with immediate effect," he said in his letter to PPP General Secretary Dr Cheddi Jagan.

In its statement, the PPP said an investigating committee relating to Snagg's functions as a City Councillor had come to the conclusion that he had been "in grave breach of certain Party norms and discipline."

The decision to expel Snagg was taken at a Central Committee meeting attended by Snagg Thursday evening. He was requested to resign from his positions as a City Councillor, a Party Organiser and a member of the Central Committee of the Party and, at his request, he was given until yesterday morning to do so.

The statement said the executive maintained that unless Snagg resigned from these positions, he would be expelled. "As a result of his refusal to comply with the request...Harold Snagg has been expelled from the Party and dismissed from his job as a Party Organiser."

The PPP implied in its statement that had Snagg resigned from the three positions, he would have been permitted to continue as a member of the Party. However, in his letter Snagg indicated no such interest. Instead, he walked out of the Party.

He told the Chronicle afterwards he will not give up his City Council seat. He had been an outspoken City Councillor for some eight years.

He accused the PPP of adopting a blind policy of 'non-co-operation' and of not acting in the best interest of the people. The PPP, he said, felt he was too supportive of some programmes which were in the interest of the community.

CSO: 3298/831

PNC, PPP COOPERATE ON DOMESTICS MOTION IN ASSEMBLY

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 27 Apr 84 p 1

[Article by Leon Walcott]

[Excerpts] Both the ruling People's National Congress (PNC) and the Minority People's Progressive Party (PPP) expressed concern about the conditions facing domestic workers in this country.

The PPP's concern was voiced in a motion tabled in the National Assembly yesterday by Janet Jagan. The motion was seconded by PPP Back-Bencher, Cyril Belgrave.

In a response to Cde Jagan's views on what she called the "plight of the domestic workers" who are mostly female, Manpower and Co-operatives Minister Kenneth Denny recorded the Government's concern and suggested certain amendments to the wording of the original motion.

The amended version which was later carried by the Assembly reads: "Be it resolved that the National Assembly recommends the drafting of legislation to provide for minimum pay and other matters relating to working conditions of domestic workers not covered by legislation."

Many employers Cde Jagan claimed, did not pay National Insurance for their workers, causing them to lose benefits provided for by the National Insurance Scheme (NIS).

But, Cde Denny, who is responsible for labour matters, said that since domestics are employed by individuals rather than firms it is difficult to ensure that they are covered by NIS. He invited the PPP to come up with concrete ideas to improve the lot of the domestic worker.--(GNA)

CSO: 3298/831

SPECULATION ON REPLACEMENTS FOR RETIRING POLICE OFFICIALS

Georgetown MIRROR in English 22 Apr 84 p 4

[Text] Speculation is growing about a possible replacement of Commissioner of Police, Lloyd Barker, who will retire at year-end. At least seven other top cops, including one Assistant Commissioner and four Superintendents, will also retire. They are all due for long-leave ranging from four to twelve months.

According to the Copper, organ of the Police Force, the most suitable candidates have been earmarked to fill the vacancies.

Sources inside the force have intimated that the main contenders in the running for the post of Commissioner are Balram Ragubir, Cecil "Skip" Roberts, Laurie Lewis and Campbell. They all hold the rank of Deputy Commissioners.

Regubir who has been featuring prominently next to Barker at public functions had been assigned to the major task set by government to smash the smuggling racket across Guyana's frontiers.

Skip Roberts, Guyana's representative on Interpol, has for years commanded the Criminal Investigations Department (CID), spearheading the on-going battle with the crime gangs and dope rings. He has frequently been seen next to President Burnham during the periodic horse-riding jaunts around the City, a clear indication of his prominence.

The sources indicated that a prime candidate might be Laurie Lewis, a one-time PNC-supported student activist at the University of Guyana, who now heads the National Guard outfit and considered the de facto head of the Special Branch, replacing Mentore who mysteriously disappeared from Guyana just under four years ago.

Campbell is at present Editor of the Force's newspaper, Copper. He is considered a seasoned public relations man in the Force.

CSO: 3298/831

COUNTRY SECTION

GUYANA

MANY VACANCIES IN PUBLIC SECTOR GOING UNFILLED

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 25 Apr 84 p 4

[Text] Well over one hundred vacancies exist in various areas of the local Public Sector.

According to the Central Recruitment and Manpower Agency (CRMA) there are vacancies for carpenters, shipwrights, mechanics, electricians, plumbers, draughtsmen, porters, security guards, laboratory assistants, fitters, machinists, general and accounts clerks, typists, secretaries and stenographers.

Many public corporations need workers to perform semi-skilled and skilled tasks.

The Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation needs porters, heavy duty truck drivers, welders, industrial electricians, and labourers with food handlers certificates. However, some of these vacancies exist at the corporation's out-of-town locations such as Farm on the East Bank of Demerara and Versailles on the West Bank of Demerara.

Another agency with a lot of vacancies is the Guyana National Engineering Corporation (GNEC) which needs auto electricians, shipwrights, fabricators, electricians, fitters and a clerk.

Senior officials of the two corporations said that many applicants reject the jobs after they realise that the vacancies exist at out-of-town locations.

A GPC official explained that some of the workers leave the jobs after a few days. Some cited transportation difficulties as their main problem.

A senior GNEC official said that many of the applicants live in Georgetown and find it uneconomical to pay high fares to get to work.

As regards the existing vacancies, the official expressed the view that persons who were employed with the Guyana Mining Enterprise (GUYMINE) may be suitable to fill some of the vacancies in his corporation.

Applications can be submitted to the corporation's Linden Office, he added.

Vacancies also exist at Diamond Estate for mechanics, drivers and book-keepers; at LBI Estate for plumbers, constables, fitter-/machinists and weeders; at the Ministry of Transport at Timehri for carpenters and at the Ministry of Works for an equipment operator.

The Ministry of Housing, University of Guyana and several other Departments and Ministries have also advertised vacancies.--(GNA)

CSO: 3298/831

BRIEFS

TASS ON CAPOTE VIEWS--Georgetown (TASS)--The Soviet peace initiatives meet with ardent support from all peoples, who do not wish to fall victim of a nuclear catastrophe, to which the unrestrained arms race may lead, said Anillo Capote, Secretary-General of the Afro-Asian and Latin American People's Solidarity Organization. "A sure way towards eliminating the threat of war," he pointed out in an interview with Tass correspondent Alexander Kanishchev, "is opened by the Soviet Union's commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons." "It is also necessary to renounce completely the use of force or threat of use of force in international relations and in resolving conflicts," Capote stressed. [Text] [Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 20 Apr 84 p 5]

MINING AGREEMENT--Guyana and the Southern Star Resources Limited yesterday signed an agreement which will allow the Canadian company to explore for gold and diamonds in four areas of Guyana over a three-year period. The four areas are Baramita and Arakaka in the North West District, and Peter's Mine and Putareng in the Mazaruni Mining District. The agreement was signed at the Ministry of Energy and Mines on Brickdam. Signing on behalf of Guyana was Energy and Mines Minister Harun Rashid, while Southern Star Resources President David Fennell and Vice-President James Sparrow signed for the Canadian company. The agreement also makes provision for the Alberta-based company to be involved in the exploitation of gold and diamonds, if these are found in four areas specified in the agreement. [Excerpt] [Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 28 Apr 84 p 1]

ILLEGAL FUEL TANKERS--East Berbice (GNA)--The Police in New Amsterdam have seized two fuel tankers alleged to have been involved in a fuel racket in the Region. The tankers along with 7 500 litres (1 500 gallons) of dieselene are now impounded at the Central Police Station, New Amsterdam. Two men who were in the vehicles have been detained pending charges. According to Police Divisional Cde Hilton Cummings, a Guyoil tanker filled with 7 500 litres of fuel was consigned to the m.v. "Kimbria" the Canje River steamer, which was moored at the Stanleytown stelling. But the tanker, instead of offloading its fuel in the river vessel, was found under the Canje Bridge discharging the fuel into a private tanker. And last month, the Guyana National Energy Authority (GNEA) made a similar seizure of two tankers with a total of 9 000 litres (1 800 gallons) of fuel at West Demarara. Fuel is illegally diverted to gold and diamond miners outside the normal channels,

the GNEA has stated. It was reported that while fuel distribution was being monitored in the country, certain agencies were still engaged in illegal transactions with smugglers. [Text] [Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 23 Apr 84 p 1]

INTER-REGIONAL TRADE--East Berbice (GNA)--Regional Chairman Barkat Ally has disclosed that Region Five (Mahaica/Berbice) has embarked on a trade deal with Region Two in order to promote inter-Regional co-operation. He said: "We are purchasing certain farm produce which are in surplus from Region Two while in return we are selling eschallots, tomatoes and water melons which are grown on a large scale in Region Five. This exercise, he explained, is aimed at stimulating growth in the agriculture sector and bringing the ten regions in the country closer together. [Text] [Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 27 Apr 84 p 3]

CIVIL AVIATION APPOINTMENTS--Cde Aubrey Alexander has been appointed Deputy Director of Civil Aviation. His appointment is among several in the Department; published in the weekend issue of the Official Gazette. The others are: L.A. Moore, J. Pierre and H. Dindayal as Aviation Inspectors, G. Mahase, Senior Air Traffic Control Officer and M. Khan, Airport Manager. The Gazette also announced the appointment of J. Alexander of the Public Service Ministry as a Management Services Officer II. [Text] [Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 25 Apr 84 p 3]

WPA ON GRANMA--WPA release of April 21, 1984--WPA expresses deep concern at the April 8, 1984 Guyana supplement in GRANMA which seeks to discredit those who have justly exposed the PNC's violations of human rights. The supplement also declares this dictatorship to be an "open society" because it has what is called a "parliament." The supplement also attacked the Concerned Doctors of the Georgetown Public Hospital who performed a public service by exposing conditions there. Although it could not produce counter-revolutionaries at home, the supplement has questioned the integrity of all who see with the eyes of the suffering working people and expose the grave abuses suffered by the population. [Text] [Georgetown OPEN WORD in English 24 Apr 84 p 1]

REGION 6 PNC RESHAPING--In an effort to streamline the proper functioning of Party affairs, the East Berbice-Corentyne Regional Party Administration has taken concrete steps to restructure the entire Party machinery. Four committees have so far been formed with a view to strengthening the arm of the Party and at the same time to win the confidence of the people. Cde Santon Lambert, Regional Supervisor will head the Regional Party Affairs, Mass Organisation and Financial Administration Committee, while the Regional Orientation and International Relations Committee will be headed by Cde Isaac Chowritmootoo. The Regional People's Co-operative Committee falls under Cde Rhyburn Primo, while someone is still to be named to handle the Regional Production and Labour Committee. These Committees have been mandated to start their work immediately and each head will have to present a report at each monthly Regional Committee meetings. These restructuring of Party programmes were discussed at the Regional committee meeting on Sunday last at Manchester, Corentyne. [Text] [Georgetown NEW NATION in English 22 Apr 84 p 3]

CRITICISM OF HELP FOR GUYANA--In its editorial of April 1984 'Caribbean Contact' has criticised "those in the Caribbean and elsewhere who continue to carry on 'business as usual' with the Georgetown administration" of President Forbes Burnham. Guyana should not be allowed to become yet another Caribbean territory where options for its future are presumed to be violent revolution or extra-regional invasion by invitation, owing to lack of will by the rest of the Caribbean to take peaceful yet firm action in support of the Guyanese people's struggle for liberty and survival. Referring to a statement by nine Women's organisations in Guyana released to mark International Women's Day, the editorial expressed the view that "the call by Guyanese women for support in the struggle against indignities, malnutrition and death should not fall on deaf ears." [Text] [Georgetown CATHOLIC STANDARD in English 22 Apr 84 p 1]

CSO: 3298/832

COUNTRY SECTION

SURINAME

BRIEFS

THE HAGUE: HAAKMAT MEETING--The Hague, 2 May--Surinamese Ambassador Henk Herrenberg said he had held talks here today with members of the exile group led by former Surinamese Foreign Minister Andre Haakmat. The opposition group, who last week said they wished to hold an international conference on Surinam with representatives of the military regime led by Desi Bouterse, had put forward suggestions which would be forwarded to the government in Paramaribo, Herrenberg said. The talks had taken place in a 'constructive' atmosphere, he added. A spokesman for the group said members wished to send a delegation to Paramaribo, despite Bouterse's statement yesterday that he 'had nothing to say' to them. [Text] [The Hague ANP NEWS BULLETIN in English 3 May 84 p 5]

INVESTIGATION OF UNION RIGHTS--Utrecht, 4 May--A delegation from the World Confederation of Labour is leaving this weekend for Surinam to investigate union rights and freedoms under the military regime of Lieutenant Colonel Desi Bouterse, the Protestant Dutch Trade Union Federation (CNV) said here today. CNV Vice Chairman Henk Hofstede will be representing his organisation on the delegation. The delegation was originally refused visas for Surinam, but the authorities granted them this week. Members will be holding talks with representatives of the Surinamese Government, the opposition, union leaders and members, and the church, the CNV said. Hofstede will be joined on the delegation by members of union movements in Uruguay and the Netherlands Antilles. [Text] [The Hague ANP NEWS BULLETIN in English 5 May 84 p 4]

CSO: 3200/27

GUARDIAN SAYS CHAMBERS SHOULD ATTEND CARICOM MEETING

Port-of-Spain SUNDAY GUARDIAN in English 6 May 84 p 6

[Editorial]

[Text] We must say how disappointed we are at the reported decision of Prime Minister George Chambers not to attend the next Caricom Heads of Government conference scheduled to take place in July in the Bahamas.

It would be easy to believe that his decision has more to do with the Grenada crisis of last October than with the suggested problems of trade with our regional partners.

As one of the few Prime Ministers who did not support the US/Caribbean invasion of Grenada, Mr Chambers is perhaps reluctant to meet at this stage with his colleagues who did. The wounds which he said were deep "though not fatal" have apparently not quite healed.

Well, Prime Ministers are human and entitled to their hurt. But Prime Ministers also have responsibilities and commitments that go beyond personal feelings, and it is this consideration we hope that will encourage Mr Chambers to change his mind and attend the conference.

We agree entirely that Trinidad and Tobago has done everything and more to observe the Caricom Agreement both in terms of the written rules and the intended spirit of co-operation.

The help this country has extended to its regional neighbours is exemplary and the record stands unchallenged. Unfortunately and sadly, reciprocity has fallen way below what was expected and there are indeed many of our neighbours who see Trinidad and Tobago as the proverbial goose with endless golden eggs.

It is therefore perfectly understandable if Mr Chambers feels fed up and is turning his sights farther afield for friends who may appreciate us better.

New friends are always welcome of course, but the fact of the matter is that we live in the Caribbean region. We are part of it and always will be.

Traditionally Trinidad and Tobago has held a leadership role, and if our influence today is not as strong as it should be we must accept some of the blame.

For years the late Prime Minister, Dr Eric Williams refused to attend a Caricom meeting and year by year we lost opportunity after opportunity of playing our natural and distinctive role in Caribbean affairs.

We were glad to see all this changing with Prime Minister Chambers. But alas, he seems to be once more adopting the Eric Williams style of turning away, thereby choosing the line of least resistance.

It is a straight case of "if you haven't got a ticket you haven't got a chance," and Trinidad and Tobago cannot hope to achieve anything by opting out at this stage. On the contrary we have to be most present at Prime Ministerial level and convince our neighbours that it takes two hands to clap and that givers must also receivers be.

At the time of the Grenada invasion we disagreed with the stand of Mr Chambers and the Government. We thought it was a wrong decision and we still do. But this is not time for bitterness about the past.

Trinidad and Tobago has a key role, a decisive role to play in Caribbean affairs. We know Mr Chambers recognises this. We hope he does not let history record that he let the opportunity slip out of his hands, because his heart was still a bit sore.

CSO: 3298/821

MAHA SABHA OFFICIAL SEES 'POLITICAL WAR FOR HINDU VOTE'

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 7 May 84 pp 1, 9

[Text] Secretary General of the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha (SDMS) Mrs Satnarayan Maharaj said yesterday that the organisation did not take political sides, but individual members were free to support whatever political party they desired.

"That has always been the tradition," he said, and he claimed that there was now "a political war for the Hindu vote."

He said this at a Press conference at the SDMS headquarters, Eastern Main Road, St Augustine, yesterday, when he claimed that attacks were being made in Parliament against the SDMS and its personnel by some Opposition parliamentarians.

Last week, the SDMS petitioned members of the House of Representatives asking for rules to be introduced to prevent its members from villifying, humiliating and injuring "the character of citizens and institutions, under the guise of parliamentary privilege.

At yesterday's Press conference, Mr Maharaj said some statements made had been following in the footsteps of a systematic attempt to destroy the Maha Sabha and fragment the Hindu community.

Recalling statements made in some debates, Mr Maharaj said: "We cannot find redress in court, because whatever is being said is privileged and protected from any court action."

The SDMS, he said, was embarking on a threefold approach to the problem, and the first step was to print copies of the statements made and distribute them.

The SDMS would continue to agitate for changes in the debating rules in Parliament, he said, and thirdly, would "respond positively and directly to any future attacks against our organisation and our personnel."

"It is like a political war, and what was happening had to do with the 1986 elections," Mr Maharaj said, claiming that what happened in 1981 was that the "Hindu vote" went three ways"...and they were no longer stereotyped, but were now up for grabs.

"It has always been the tradition in the Maha Sabha that the organisation itself does not take political sides, but the membership can support whatever political party so desired," he said.

CSO: 3298/821

CHAMBERS ADDRESSES PNM YOUTH LEAGUE, HAILS PARTY'S ROLE

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 7 May 84 pp 1, 9

[Article by Clevon Raphael]

[Text] Constitution of the ruling People's National Movement (PNM) was formulated to create the kind of society where the youths of the country would always have equality of opportunity, and where the mass of the population would be the owners of the means of production.

Prime Minister George Chambers in his capacity as Political Leader of the PNM underlined this point while addressing a rally of the PNM's Youth League yesterday afternoon. He also said if there was no PNM, there would be no Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr Chambers, who gave his large audience a comparative picture of what the international scenario was like--with emphasis on Trinidad and Tobago--28 years ago when the PNM was formed, also spoke about the need for young people to work towards building the society and not "copping out."

The Prime Minister said when the PNM won the elections of 1956 one of the first things it did was to increase the number of scholarships from 40 to 100.

During the pre-PNM era, he continued, seven eights of Port-of-Spain comprised barracks, where dozens of people lived in a yard with one toilet and one bath.

"To leave here to go to San Fernando, you journeyed perilously through tapia houses for miles and miles and miles, and estate barracks with one door, one window, in which many of our citizens and their ten children lived in one room.

"That was the society of 1956. There was one secondary school in Trinidad and Tobago--Queen's Royal College."

Speaking on the theme of the rally, "Perspectives for a new Youth League," Mr Chambers said he gave them an insight into the past, so that in their deliberations they would have a proper understanding of the task ahead.

In a real sense, he said, the movement which had taken place during the last 28 years was undertaken by people who notwithstanding all those odds about which he spoke, had the guts to say: "I must make my contribution, no matter what the personal sacrifice might be to me. I must make a contribution to lift this country to where my children might be proud."

Noting that some speakers mentioned the need to amend the constitution of the party, Mr Chambers countered:

"Now, so that when we talk about the constitution of the party, the constitution of the party was formulated not only to correct that (the social imbalances which existed then)...those inefficiencies, but to create the kind of society centuries from now where the youth of the country will always have equality of opportunity.

"Where the mass of the population would be the owners of the means of production, where the mass of the children will be educated free."

Stressing it was the PNM which instituted dialogue with the masses, Mr Chambers said the country was now a far cry from where it was in 1956, even though he did not want to burden them with facts and figures.

"We did not achieve that what we have achieved in the 28 years without some pain...we have...we have. Once you have mass political education, once you have a craving for knowledge, once you have a facility for travel, once you have a democratic government, you cannot prevent agitation.

"A man always wants more...nothing wrong with that, nothing wrong with that...We expect that...because every time you ask for more we are determined to see if we cannot get more for you.

"Above all, it has left a sort of indifference on the part of the older and more developed countries about the problems of the developing world, and this, too, has brought a sort of international political brinkmanship which demonstrates a kind of disregard for human life."

The Youth League, he emphasised, must face up to these realities.

He urged them to create a climate of discipline and rationale for dealing with problems. Mr Chambers ended his speech with the following, which earned him sustained applause:

"I am personally very happy to have been associated with your discussions today, and I look forward, Mr Chairman, to the recommendations which will come from these consultations because I am convinced, whether many people are outside or not, I am convinced that if there is no PNM, believe me, there will be no Trinidad and Tobago."

CSO: 3298/821

MINISTER SCOFFS AT REPORTS OF 'WARRING FACTIONS' IN PNM

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 9 May 84 p 3

[Text] Anyone who believes there are warring factions in the ruling People's National Movement (PNM) is living in a fool's paradise.

Agriculture Minister Kamaluddin Mohammed, Deputy Political Leader of the PNM (Legislative Matters), said yesterday when asked to comment on remarks made by Mr A.N.R. Robinson, Chairman of the Tobago House of Assembly, regarding the PNM's plan to hold its annual (1984) convention in the sister island in September.

Mr Mohammed, the only surviving founder-member of the PNM still in the Cabinet, said he did not wish to enter into any "confrontation or controversy" with anybody.

But on Mr Robinson's assertion that the "warring factions" within the PNM were using Tobago as their battleground, Mr Mohammed said: "Anyone who wants to believe that there are warring factions within the PNM must be living in a fool's paradise. "The PNM is like a sleeping giant and at the appropriate time it will rise.

"In the last three weeks inflammatory statements have been made in the Press circulated to denigrate the PNM. But as I said, at the appropriate time the people will deliver their verdict."

Mr Mohammed conceded there were shortcomings which were to be expected and added: "We feel satisfied we are doing the right things.

"And the Prime Minister was right when he told the PNM Youth League on Sunday that without the PNM there is little hope for Trinidad and Tobago."

A Misconception

Clearing up what he termed as a "misconception" people had that Tobago should be treated as separate entity in the administrative set-up, Mr Mohammed reiterated it was an integral part of the unitary State of Trinidad and Tobago.

He added: "I fail to see why the fuss about the PNM holding its convention in Tobago. It is just like going to Caroni, Toco, or any other part of Trinidad. I am sure the Tobagonians will welcome us when we hold the convention there.

"This plan was not an overnight thing...we had long planned to hold it in Tobago...there is no big mystery in this idea to hold it in Tobago."

Asked about the transportation costs for the 2,500 or 3,000 delegates and observers expected to attend, Mr Mohammed explained: "Nothing is definite on this factor but delegates and observers will pay their own transportation costs. Those who cannot go by air I am sure will do so by the boat.

"Although the convention will be tackling serious issues (the agenda is still to be worked out), I am also sure many of those attending will take the opportunity to use it as a little holiday in between the serious discussions.

"With respect to accommodation I also think that is being looked after by the Tobago East and West constituencies of the party."

It would be the first-time in the 28-year history of the PNM that the party would be holding its annual convention in Tobago.

Political observers have suggested that it is a tactical move on the part of the PNM to regain political control of Tobago which it lost in both the general and the THA elections.

CSO: 3298/821

FISCAL PROBLEMS NOTED IN CENTRAL BANK REPORT FOR 1983

Capital Project Cutbacks

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 9 May 84 p 4

[Article by George Harvey]

[Text] Spending by Government on capital projects was cut back by \$738.5 million 20.6 percent last year. This is stated in the annual report of the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago for 1983.

The reduced spending was one of the measures undertaken in an attempt to contain the expansion of overall budget deficit which totalled \$2,857.3 million in 1983.

The report noted that last year's deficit "reflected the continuing decline of government's budgetary position first evidence by a small overall deficit in 1979 (\$339 million) and more firmly established in 1982 when a deficit of \$2,652.4 million (13.9 percent of Gross Domestic Product) was recorded."

It added: "Though the relative size of the overall deficit as a share of GDP was stabilised, a disturbing aspect of the fiscal performance in 1983 was the emergence of a deficit of \$14.5 million on recurrent account."

The report pointed out: "A recurrent deficit cannot be sustained, especially with past savings having been largely drawn down.

"The recurrent account deficit in 1983 points, therefore, to an urgent need for fiscal measures both on the revenue and expenditure sides of the account."

Government's expenditure "fell by 1.4 percent in 1983, marking the end of a decade of rapid growth at annual average rate of 32.6 percent.

Total expenditure in 1983 was \$9,341.3 million (46 percent of GDP) compared with \$9,477.1 million or 49.5 percent of GDP in 1982.

Record Public Debt

Port-of-Spain SUNDAY GUARDIAN in English 6 May 84 pp 1, 16

[Article by George Harvey]

[Text] Government in its frantic search for money, pushed the national public debt of Trinidad and Tobago to an all-time high of \$2,575,200 last year.

Main sources of funds included the borrowing of \$408 million on the foreign market and the raising of \$275 million at home through the issue of treasury bills, development and tax-free savings bonds.

The \$2.5 billion outstanding in 1983 meant an increase of \$476.7 million over the two billion dollars-plus owed to both foreign and local lenders in 1982.

Internal debt moved from \$760.4 million in 1982 to just over one billion dollars last year. External debt jumped from \$1,338.1 million to \$1,546.2 million.

Rapid Decline

Repayments of \$289.9 million to Government from securities held overseas held down the external debt incurred for last year to \$208.1 million.

State of the national debt is contained in the annual report of the Central Bank for 1983.

The year was characterised by a still rapid decline in the local economy with attendant adverse effects, including dwindling petro-dollars resulting in a \$2.8 million budget deficit for 1983.

In its search for money during the year, the Government was very active in the foreign market:

--It raised two new loans totaling US \$408 million through syndications, with several banks participating;

--It drew down \$90 million from previously established loan facilities to finance the Mount Hope Medical Complex and expansion of the cement plant;

--It received repayments of \$289.9 million (including redemption of privately-issued Deutschmark and Swiss franc bonds placed in 1978). This was responsible in holding down the external debt to \$208.1 million.

Local Market

The report noted: "External debt operations in 1983 underscored the Government's increasing reliance on commercial sources with the consequential shortening maturity profile of the external debt.

"At the end of 1983, 68.5 percent of external debt was held by commercial lenders as compared with 59.8 percent in 1982."

Government incurred \$293.9 million in debts in the local market for 1983. The report pointed out that "for the first time since 1975, the treasury bill issue was increased, rising by \$150 million to \$251 million.

"In addition, the Government raised \$75 million through an issue of development bonds and a further \$50.9 million from the sale of tax-free savings bonds.

"Other borrowing during the year consisted of a loan of \$18 million subscribed by a consortium of local commercial banks towards the purchase of aircraft for the national airline.

"Repayment of local loans totalled \$25.3 million in 1983."

Under "money and credit," the report states: "The slowdown in the domestic economy was reflected in the key monetary aggregates during 1983. The monetary base...actually fell by 6.4 percent.

"The magnitude of the swing in monetary conditions in the economy can be gauged from the fact that base money had grown at an average annual rate of 25 percent in the period 1977-'81 and by 62 percent in 1982."

[Editor's Note: The Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN of 8 May 1984, page 3, noted that the \$2.5 billion debt "represented 12.8 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the overall economy."]

Drop in Investor Deposits

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 7 May 84 p 1

[Text] Deposits by investors in the country's finance houses fell by \$111.3 million between 1982 and 1983.

According to figures given in the Annual Report of the Central Bank for 1983, the deposits in 1982 amounted to \$289.5 million, compared with last year's figure of \$178.8 million.

"The performance of finance companies was clearly affected by the severe liquidity (tight money) crisis and subsequent suspension of business of one of the larger companies towards the end of the third quarter of the year."

It was noted that the total in deposits with finance houses for the second half of the year was "\$55.7 million compared with \$123.1 million in the first six months."

The suspended company referred to was International Trust Ltd (ITL) which was stopped from operating by the Central Bank on September 15. ITL has since been placed in receivership through a High Court order.

The report adds: "The deposits of the company in question on its last day of business were \$130 million, and the number of depositors totalled 5,591."

Credit conditions in the commercial banking system became increasingly tight as the year progressed. "The banks started the year with excess liquidity of \$474 million--equivalent to 7.5 percent of deposits.

"This margin of loanable resources, though much lower than the late 1970s, permitted the banks for a time to extend credit at a faster rate than the growth in deposits."

That was not to last as the report states: "By July, however, excess liquidity had fallen to barely \$14.8 million or 0.4 percent of deposits, even lower than the conventionally prudent margin for meeting swings in transaction requirements.

Tight Liquidity

The report said the tight liquidity situation persisted to the end of 1983, with the result "that in the second half of the year, bank credit increased at an annualised rate of only 6.9 percent, compared with 28.4 percent in the first six months.

"Over the year as a whole, bank credit increased by 17 percent compared with 22 percent in 1982 and an annual average of 25 percent in the period 1977-'81."

The report later stated that "net effect was that total commercial bank deposit liabilities grew by only 5.5 percent (\$364.2 million), compared with an increase of 36.8 percent during 1982 at an average annual rate of 23.5 percent over the period 1977-'81."

Import for Unions

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 10 May 84 p 8

[Editorial]

[Text] Decline, decline, decline. That is the inescapable theme running through the Central Bank's review of the national economy which is contained in the bank's 1983 report issued last week.

It is one thing for us to talk about a downturn in the economy in general terms and to urge the country as a whole to accept the need for restraint and a readjustment of expectations and aspirations.

But it is also important to provide the facts and figures of our changing economic fortunes for the enlightenment of those who may want to dismiss the urgent call for restraint as so much old talk.

That is why we would suggest the Central Bank's report as required reading for our trade union leaders, particularly those militants whose exorbitant wage demands are not only bizarre in our present circumstances but also tragic in the extent and cost of needless disruption, loss of productivity, increasing unemployment and social distress they seem destined to cause.

Downturn

The Central Bank's report is significant in any case because it provides the latest picture of the state of the country's economy. To say the least, it is not a rosy profile; the impact of the downturn is evident in almost every sector.

The report presents a chastening mirror into which we would like every citizen to gaze. Its mass of statistics amounts to the basic and inescapable fact that the economy of our country is experiencing a serious decline.

And not even the ordinary man-in-the-street would need an economist to tell him that such a downturn must be pervasive, rippling through every level, every phase, every unit of economic activity in the country, although some areas may actually feel its impact more severely than others.

In such circumstances, it becomes necessary for every business enterprise to adjust its operations to meet the adverse pressures, to strive to remain viable and, therefore, to survive. In the free enterprise system, this is the wisest and most natural way for the living organism to react.

As we have noted before, it is tragic that some trade union leaders seem incapable of grasping this well established fact of economic life, and accommodating themselves to it.

Indeed, one is often led to wonder whether they fully understand the dynamics of the country's economic system and its essential sensitivity to the prevailing climate.

Such is the nature of an open economy in the capitalist world. And while there are a few who may find this term repulsive, there can be no escape from the reality of its ebb and flow unless, of course, they should seek their habitat in the coercive systems of the Communist countries.

Prospect

The truth is that in this period of contraction, trade union leaders must make a choice between the inevitability of readjustment or a policy of futile confrontation.

In other countries where the global recession has resulted in a drastic slowdown of economic activity and growth, leading to massive unemployment in some cases, trade unions have seen the wisdom of adopting the former course.

It is an unhappy prospect that, in our country where retrenchment and joblessness have not been so severe, some trade union leaders have chosen the latter course.

Yet there are encouraging signs that an increasingly large proportion of the country's labour force is no longer prepared to follow or support the militant tactics of these radical trade union leaders which, as a record of their performance would show, have led to more loss of jobs than any success in obtaining unrealistic wage increments.

Clearly, the major concern of working people in the present circumstances should be the questions of job security and increasing productivity, not the struggle to maintain rates of salary increase which, as the Central Bank's review would indicate, are now impossibly absurd.

CSO: 3298/822

TEXACO ROW WITH UNION LEADS TO WORK STOPPAGE, GAS LINES

Consumer Fears

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 10 May 84 p 1

[Excerpts] Fears of a gasoline shortage caused by industrial action at the Texaco Refinery, Pointe-a-Pierre, had motorists rushing to gas stations yesterday to "fill up" their tanks.

Vehicles started lining up from early afternoon in what was described as panic buying.

The rush for gas began when negotiations for a new industrial agreement between Texaco Trinidad Inc and the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union (OWTU) took a dramatic turn yesterday as some workers at the Pinte-a-Pierre Bond stopped working.

Their action resulted in the interruption of gasoline supplies to service stations.

Minister of Labour, Social Security and Co-operatives, Mr Errol Mahabir, will meet both parties today at 10 a.m. at Riverside Plaza.

Mr Mahabir said yesterday that he had decided to intervene in negotiations between Texaco and OWTU. He said he had met the OWTU in Port of Spain and was in telephone communication with Texaco and had arranged the meeting between both parties. He had asked both sides to secure the establishment of normal operations.

On the basis of discussions he had held so far, he said he did not believe that there was any reason for panic buying of gas.

Officials of Texaco declined to comment on the general situation except to say that as agreed, the company and the union were due to meet this afternoon to continue negotiations. The meeting is set for Beaumont Hill, Pointe-a-Pierre at 1.30 p.m.

Negotiations have been going on since November 1983 without a wage offer made by the company.

Workers Dissatisfied

According to reliable sources yesterday, Texaco agreed to a request from Labour Minister Mahabir not to proceed with disciplinary action against those workers who had walked off their jobs.

The company acceded to the Minister's appeal on the condition that the union give an assurance that the workers would return to their jobs.

It is understood that, instead of urging their members to get back on the job, some union officials went and caused a further stoppage of work.

Texaco Wage Offer

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 16 May 84 p 1

[Article by Suzanne Morris]

[Text] Officials of Texaco Trinidad Incorporated have agreed to make a wage increase offer to their employees but are only willing to concede five percent over one year.

The offer, a change from the company's previous position of no wage increase, has not met with enthusiastic response from the bargaining agents for Texaco workers, the Oilfields Workers Trade Union (OWTU).

The company made the offer during talks between the union, company officials and the Minister of Labour, Social Security and Co-operatives, Mr Errol Mahabir at Riverside Plaza, Port of Spain, yesterday. Discussions followed the critical situation that developed on Monday when workers at the Pointe-a-Pierre bond stopped working.

Shortly after the meeting, which lasted two hours, the Labour Minister expressed regret over the circumstances in which it took place. He explained that the matter had not been formally referred to the Ministry as a trade dispute.

Mr Mahabir said he held separate talks with company officials before the meeting and persuaded them to make the wage offer. He said the five percent offer from Texaco meant that they could return to having meaningful negotiations with the union over a new three-year contract.

"Every effort should be made to have things returned to normalcy now," the Minister said.

According to Mr Mahabir, the Labour Ministry is not formally involved in the Texaco/OWTU negotiations at present.

"I did my duty in getting the parties together for discussions and I will be keeping an eye on developments. I have asked both sides to try to restore normalcy to operations."

Mr Mahabir said he was satisfied that there was adequate scope for the parties to negotiate.

Discussions were held in the light of talks now in progress between Government and Texaco for the buying over of the company. It was because of this that only a first year offer was made.

But OWTU took a different view of the company's offer.

Not Encouraging

"It is hardly likely to raise the enthusiasm of the employees," Mr Errol McLeod, OWTU's vice-president, said after the meeting.

"The Minister held separate discussions with the company before the meeting. We suspect that they called Coral Gables, Miami (venue of Government/Texaco discussions).

"The Minister also told us that there is likely to be a new corporate structure at Texaco before the end of the year and the continued discussions are likely to take place under different conditions."

Mr McLeod described the company's wage offer of five percent as "not even a strike offer."

Before the meeting, Mr McLeod declared, "Texaco should not only pay workers decent wages but they should also pack up and leave Trinidad."

He said the "ball was in the court" of the company and Government.

Texaco officials declined to comment on their latest position.

Yesterday evening the union held a three-hour meeting at its headquarters in San Fernando to bring members up to date on the latest position. In a statement afterwards, the union said the members rejected Texaco's offer as "unreasonable and unrealistic."

They felt that the offer set a "very dangerous precedent in industrial relations as it will adversely affect OWTU members in particular and workers in general on the issue of wage freeze."

Gasoline Supplies

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 16 May 84 p 1

[Article by Mikey Mahabir]

[Text] San Fernando--Every gas station in the country should receive adequate supplies of gasoline by today since State-owned Trinidad and Tobago Oil Company Limited (Trintoc) is in a position to meet local demands.

In fact, Trintoc sent out a barge load of gasoline and jet fuel yesterday morning to National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NPMC) at Sea Lots. It will be left solely to NPMC to have the products distributed expeditiously to the filling stations and also to Piarco International Airport.

But while Trintoc is trying to fill the gap created by the labour problems at Texaco Trinidad Inc, Pointe-a-Pierre, Texaco itself has its cat cracker down.

Contacted on the matter, a Texaco spokesman said: "No work is being done on the cat cracker and associated units. Because of the stoppage of work the start up of the cat cracker will be delayed. We have adequate supplies of LPG (cooking gas) and gasoline to meet local demands."

The cat cracker was taken down late last month for test and inspection and was due to be down for five to six weeks. With the present labour unrest, it means that it would take a longer time to get back on stream, said a source close to the company.

When the news burst about labour problems at Texaco's Pointe-a-Pierre bond department on Monday, there was a rush on gas stations by motorists for gasoline.

No Justification

However, an official of the National Petroleum said yesterday there was no justification for the panic buying of gasoline.

The source said there were adequate stocks of gasoline at the company's Pointe-a-Pierre and Sea Lots compounds.

"Tank wagon deliveries are moving rapidly and there is an improvement in deliveries at the Pointe-a-Pierre and Sea Lots compounds.

According to the official panic buying has been rapidly drawing down stocks at service stations throughout the country.

Meanwhile motorists continued to form long queues at service stations as panic buying continued yesterday.

At the end of yesterday it was expected that more than 200,000 gallons of gasoline would have been delivered from the Pointe-a-Pierre bond where operations returned to normal.

It was also expected that more than 80,000 gallons of aviation jet fuel would have been delivered. Supplies of diesolene, fuel oil and kerosene were also sent out.

The flow of cooking gas was uninterrupted.

Disturbances by Leftist Unions

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 15 May 84 p 6

[Editorial]

[Text] After a constriction in the supply of cement which severely affected the building industry, the country now appears to be threatened by a shortage of gasoline which is likely to create even wider hardships among our people.

As we have pointed out in recent editorials, the crisis at the plant of Trinidad Cement Limited was unnecessary, unwarranted and quite ridiculous.

The crisis now brewing at the Texaco refinery, Pointe-a-Pierre, is equally preposterous. And it is no coincidence that both these damaging disruptions are the result of industrial action inspired by the leadership of the Oil-field Workers Trade Union.

Nor is it accidental that disputes, demonstrations and unrest, with varying degrees of violence, are now disturbing almost every enterprise in which OWTU represents the work force, including a number of private sector organisations and, most recently, T&TEC.

Footsteps

Surely, the time has come for workers and citizens of this country to wake up to the national menace presented by this union and its officials who, in the footsteps of their Marxist leader, not only pay ideological homage to the Communist system but, at every possible opportunity, use their influence over workers to engage in all the disruptive tactics dictated by Marxist strategy.

Regardless of what some of their members may think, the basic objective of the radical leadership of the OWTU and other unions of the Left is neither the improvement of the lot of workers nor the economic development of the country.

They are committed, by the compulsion of their revolutionary philosophy, to the creation of a continual state of unrest and uncertainty, conflict and confusion leading to what they hope would be a total breakdown of the "decadent" economic and political system and the emergence of a new and classless dispensation.

That is the dialectic mission that all good Marxists must seek to fulfil. And that is the real purpose behind the disturbances that are now erupting in various sectors of the country.

The downturn in the nation's economy after the boom years and the crucial need for restraint, prudence and a productive response at all levels have provided radical union leaders with another good opportunity for them to do their ideological thing.

The tragedy of our situation is the obvious inability of Leftist trade union leaders to see that their own success is, in fact, the most telling refutation of their own ideological convictions.

They have demonstrated most dramatically the equitable nature of our economy, their operations have helped to distribute the wealth of the country to the masses of our people, promoting a higher standard of living for all.

And it was precisely the total absence of this kind of sharing in the early years of the Industrial Revolution in England which inspired Marx to devise his theories about exploitation of the "capitalist class." If Marx could return to Trinidad now he would most likely be shocked at agitation of his disciples.

But ideology, like religious fanaticism and other forms of brain-washing, is a horribly compulsive thing. As means of economic organisation, the free enterprise system--which Marxists believe to be historically doomed--has long proved its superiority over the disappointing efforts of totalitarian socialism. But the revolutionary tactics continue, regardless.

The present trouble at Texaco Trinidad Inc is a particularly horrible example. The distress of the company is well-known. It has been battered by the drastic decline in the international oil industry; its refinery has been running at great loss for a number of years.

Oblivious

The company has declared its willingness to pull out of the country and has offered to sell its refinery to the government. Texaco, to put it bluntly, is down and almost out.

In the interest of the future development of our country, however, Texaco should be given every opportunity to become viable again and so continue its operations in the production, refining and marketing of our petroleum.

But is the OWTU, which has extracted from this company the highest wages for any group of workers in the country, willing to give Texaco that break? No way.

Totally oblivious to the desperate plight of the company, the union continues to demand a wage offer from the company which could only serve to reinforce its decision to pull out of the country.

And now to escalate the conflict, the union has called for industrial action at the company's bond where gasoline is delivered through NP tenders. If that action continues, it would obviously lead to a shortage of gas in the country. But holding the entire society to ransom is no big thing for the OWTU. The objective after all, is chaos and confusion.

CSO: 3298/823

ISCOTT SHIPS TO EUROPE; ORDERS SOUGHT IN SPAIN, ITALY

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 10 May 84 p 4

[Text] Marketing representatives of the Iron and Steel Company (ISCOTT) will leave this weekend for Italy to finalise negotiations for sale of 60,000 tonnes of its products.

A statement from ISCOTT said that the company had just concluded its second of two 20,000-tonne shipments from Point Lisas.

Following is the release:

The Iron and Steel Company of Trinidad and Tobago has again recorded significant sales of Direct Reduced Iron (DRI) to Europe.

ISCOTT has just concluded the second of two 20,000-tonne shipments from its Point Lisas dock, and this weekend its marketing representatives will leave for both Spain and Italy to finalise negotiations for a further 60,000-tonne sale of that material.

Outlook

ISCOTT will be going a step further, when its representatives finalise negotiations in Spain and Italy for three 20,000-tonne orders to be supplied within the next three months.

"This is just one of the favourable and positive signs, from a marketing standpoint, for our company. The trends that started in 1983 are continuing, the prices are improving, and we have begun to see a favourable outlook," a statement from ISCOTT's marketing department said.

In its other production areas, the company has sales commitments for its wire rod during the second and third quarters of this year to customers in the United States, Europe and South America.

It is not at the present time exporting any billets, which is the intermediate product used to produce wire rods. With the exception of shipments to Jamaica, the company has retained all its billets for local customers and its own rolling mill.

History

Last year, ISCOTT created history in the iron and steel industry when it established a record for the largest shipment of DRI ever to cross the Atlantic.

DRI or sponge iron is a high purity material, which along with scrap, is used in the first step in the steel-making process. It is reactive material and therefore strict international safety standards have to be observed. ISCOTT has developed some unique methods for the shipment of the product, which involves its quality control department providing technical support services its personnel monitor the DRI to ensure safe trans-oceanic transportation, and the retention of the chemical and physical properties of the product right up to destination and storage in Europe.

When ISCOTT made its shipments of pelletised DRI to Spain last year, they were the largest parcel-sizes to be shipped from this side of the world.

CSO: 3298/823

CEMENT ORDERS BOOM; MINISTER RAPS GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

Record Deliveries

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 12 May 84 p 3

[Text] Delivery of cement by Government-owned Trinidad Cement Ltd is reaching an all-time high record.

For the past nine days in this month, the company sent out 240,000 bags and 7,200 tons of cement in bulk to dealers all over the country.

According to Mr Carrol Robinson, general manager, the situation with deliveries is returning to normalcy.

To crown the speed with which bulk cement in particular was being received by customers, Mr Motilal Moonan, President of the General Contractors Association, when contacted yesterday, expressed the hope that the present rate of supply would continue.

Only last week Mr Moonan complained about the lack of supply of bulk cement. Yesterday he said: "After complaining to the management of Trinidad Cement Ltd, I now wish to congratulate them on the prompt action in deliveries." He congratulated the cement company and, in particular, Mr Robinson and the workers for the prompt action resulting in the supply improving about one hundred percent.

Mr Moonan suggested that TCL should establish a public relations department or a proper sales department with officials going out on the field speaking with dealers and clients to find out their problems with a view to having management solve them and avoid a crisis.

He believes that management and workers should co-operate and work together for the improvement of the industry.

It was revealed that the average demand for cement on a monthly basis was 39,000 tons with bulk cement comprising about 15,000-16,000 tons and 500,000 to 550,000 bags.

Trinidad Cement Ltd is at the moment concentrating on clearing up a large backlog of orders.

The company has to depend on power supply from the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (TTEC) and whenever there is a outage operations are severely affected as was the case recently, Mr Robinson pointed out.

The old cement plant had a capacity of 200,000 tons a year. The new plant has a capacity of 300,000 tons a year.

Part of the new plant has already been put into operation and the remainder of the structure is expected to be commissioned next year. Total cost of the new plant is about \$45 million (US).

Mr Robinson stressed that the supply of bulk cement has been adequate in the market place.

Problems only arose whenever there was a power failure. The backlog of orders is really in bag cement.

A marked step-up in deliveries of bag cement was observed up to yesterday with loaded trucks moving out of the plant at Claxton Bay regularly.

Francis Views on Construction

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 16 May 84 p 1

[Text] Minister of Works High Francis said yesterday that Government's efforts in decentralising the construction industry have resulted in almost the complete emasculation of the industry.

The Minister was speaking at the opening of a three-day construction symposium at the Trinidad Hilton where he also scolded builders for their lack of foresight in localising the industry during the boom years but instead continued to import materials and technology.

The symposium is being put on by the Management Development Centre in conjunction with the Association of Professional Engineers. An address was also given by Minister of Housing Wendell Mottley.

Minister Francis told the members he hoped his address would not be seen as a personal attack against anyone as it was purely objective. He said the decentralisation effort of the Government through agencies like NIPDEC, the Hospital Management Committee and even the Ministry of Finance, had not really benefited the industry as a whole.

He said the construction industry was one case where decentralisation had not worked and there was urgent need for the rationalisation of the construction effort.

The work being done by these agencies, he said, has resulted in a loss of work to the construction division in the Ministry of Works. The lack of technical knowhow in these agencies and departments and the inability to make maximum use of the resources available had resulted in tremendous inefficiency, the Minister said.

Local Labour

Mr Francis spoke of the fact that the industry had not sought to build for long-term benefit and had not used the boom years to be creative and innovative but continued to import systems and technology from abroad. This, he said, was symptomatic of our approach to nearly every other sector of the economy.

He agreed that it was impossible, in an economy as small as Trinidad and Tobago's, to produce any product cheaper than a metropolitan country, but said it was necessary to be extremely careful that in efforts to keep construction costs down this should not be done at the expense, for example, of local labour.

The Works Minister said that in the construction of buildings like Mt Hope Medical Complex and the Financial Complex, the industry should not look merely at the construction aspects but that they should be seen as catalysts.

He suggested for example that the construction of furniture could be spun off from such projects. The possible avenues must be seen, he said, so that it could put in place an indigenous capability that would be more long lasting.

Speaking on the question of labour, the Minister suggested that it one was looking at the role of the construction industry in the national economy then it must be centred on people. It was necessary that people must be used, he said, especially in a labour surplus economy like Trinidad and Tobago.

He said that instead of accelerating the training cycle, there was the tendency to seek constructions that minimised the need for skill and put emphasis on the screwdriver type of operation. The Minister lamented this tendency and emphasised that labour formed a substantial part of the construction industry.

The Minister also suggested that the members of the industry should set about deliberately encouraging the growth of the small construction firms which had existed before the boom years.

He made the suggestion in the light of the current tendency towards amalgamation of construction companies resulting in what could become a monopoly in the industry.

Managing Director of the Industrial Development Corporation, Mr Richardson Andrews, was the first speaker at the first session of the Construction Symposium which began yesterday.

He was followed by Mr Peter O'Connor who spoke on "Finance problems from the Contractor's Viewpoint." Also speaking were Mr B. Bonterre on "The Trinidad and Tobago National Building Code."

Mr David Chin spoke on "Management and Technical Training for Senior Personnel in the Construction Industry." Mr Gary Cross spoke on "The Success and Failure of Training Programmes for Construction Industry Employees."

The symposium continues from 9 a.m. today.

CSO: 3298/823

OFFICIAL PREDICTS SIGNIFICANT ROLE FOR AGRICULTURE

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 8 May 84 p 4

[Text] Dr Patrick Alleyne, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Food production, has predicted that agriculture will be Trinidad and Tobago's "Green Oil" of the future.

Dr Alleyne made the statement at the official opening of the Trinidad East Lions Agricultural Exhibition at Santa Rosa, Arima, last week.

In recent years, issues concerning food have become priority whenever many of the world's leaders met to review global problems, said Dr Alleyne.

"From a global perspective, the principal nutritional problem is basically one of inadequate food consumption. In essence, the problem of hunger has emerged more forcefully because there is not enough food to go around; a problem of under-nutrition rather than malnutrition."

He drew attention to reports that 50 persons died over a few days in Santo Domingo, in a riot over increased food prices. Increased food prices also triggered the 1980 strikes in Poland, ultimately resulting in the famous "Solidarity" movement.

"The availability of food is an issue which is not to be ignored. Given any set of resources available to a family, it is food that takes the first 'bite' out of whatever is available for spending."

Dr Alleyne emphasised the importance of agriculture as a basic necessity for food security. "Farmers must have a market for their crops or they will spend their time elsewhere. The people must give their support to action taken at providing market security--at reasonable cost--for our farming population."

He also warned against neglecting our own agriculture because importers may be able to bring some of the products into Trinidad and Tobago at dumped prices.

"We can't neglect our dairy or beef industry because we get cheap New Zealand or EEC milk or meat; or neglect our fruit industry we get cheap, and at times, poor quality fruits from other countries. If we do this, we will develop a mental set of discriminating against our own agriculture."

He implored the farmers to make food available to the public at reasonable prices and warned that "cheap food is not, and never has been the answer to agricultural development, more so in a developing economy."

Dr Alleyne pointed out that it is costing the Government in an excess of \$900 million per year to feed a mere one million people.

Most of the country's food bill is taken up by cereals and preparations; fruits, juices and vegetables; dairy products and eggs and meat and meat preparations--more than \$643 million in 1982.

CSO: 3298/823

WATER PROTESTERS GIVEN OK; PANDAY HITS POLICE ACTION

Criticism of Burroughs

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 12 May 84 pp 1, 3

[Article by Clevon Raphael]

[Text] An attempt by Opposition Leader Basdeo Panday to have the House of Representatives debate what he claimed the "intimidation of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago" by Commissioner of Police Randolph Burroughs, was defeated in the House yesterday afternoon.

But before Speaker Matthew Ramcharan ruled that he did not find Mr Panday's request "that the House be adjourned to discuss matters of urgent public importance." Mr Panday verbally waded into Mr Burroughs for advising residents they should not take part in a march demonstration planned for yesterday to protest the lack of water in their village, as it would be illegal.

And Prime Minister George Chambers, in an angry mood, said he was considering reporting the parliamentary reporter of another newspaper for breach of parliamentary privilege by repeatedly writing that the Demas Report was not publicly available when the document had been laid in the Lower House since January 1984.

Mr Panday in speaking on his motion, said the section of Mr Burroughs's statement which spoke of "alleged" water shortage was "political interference" and he stressed demonstrations were an integral part of a democracy.

Saying that he was sure Prime Minister Chambers would not condone any moves to prevent him from finding out the needs of the population Mr Panday complained that last year when he moved a no-confidence motion in the Prime Minister no permission was sought for PNM supporters to demonstrate outside Parliament during which he alleged Opposition members were assaulted.

The demonstrators yesterday, he said, were not illegal immigrants but citizens of Trinidad and Tobago who were suffering from the lack of water.

Mr Panday said the Police had placed barriers around Parliament without the permission from the Speaker of the House.

After Mr Panday advanced his argument for the House to accept his case, Mr Ramcharan ruled against.

The House then proceeded to debate a motion moved by senator Anthony Jacelon, Minister in the Ministry of Finance, which asked members to agree to a further extension--to May 31--the period by which Government would table in Parliament a land use plan for Trinidad and Tobago.

Opposition member for St Augustine, Mr John Humphrey, in taking issue with a speech made by Prime Minister Chambers at Sunday's PNM Youth League rally, said the mass of the population could not buy land at the prevailing prices.

Mr Chambers asked Mr Humphrey whether the Sou Sou Lands project in which he (Mr Humphreys) is a principal figure, was not acquiring agricultural lands for houses and what did he consider as the optimum infrastructural requirement for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago in 1984.

Before asking the questions Mr Chambers said he always listened with attention when Mr Humphrey made his contribution but found it difficult to do so when the St Augustine member became emotional.

Replying, Mr Humphrey agreed Sou Sou Lands did acquire agricultural lands for building homes because that was the only kind of land available.

And responding to Mr Chambers's second query, Mr Humphrey said he would like to see all citizens of Trinidad and Tobago enjoy certain amenities like good roads, proper water supply and adequate housing.

Mr Panday and National Security Minister John Donaldson were involved in a lively verbal discourse on allegations that some of the demonstrators were prevented from entering Parliament yesterday.

Replying to Mr Panday, Speaker Ramcharan said he did not issue any directive that the rules governing the entry to or departure from the House be changed for yesterday's sitting.

Minister Donaldson explained the barriers were place to ensure the personal safety of all members. The Police, he added, never discriminated with respect to the identity of persons entering or leaving Parliament.

He congratulated the Police for erecting the barriers to prevent any untoward incident.

Burroughs' Explanation

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 12 May 84 p 1

[Text] Police Commissioner Randolph Burroughs made it clear yesterday that he has no intention to stifle legitimate protest, but merely to ensure the preservation of the peace.

Mr Burroughs explained that his counsel was given out of an abundance of caution after Press reports (not in the Guardian) indicated that the demonstration would have been "the biggest since the water riots of 1902."

However, at a cordial discussion with the organisers led by Arthur Sanderson and Gould Mohammed and others at the Commissioner's request at his office at Police Headquarters, St Vincent Street, Port of Spain, about noon yesterday, it was explained that their intention was to stage a peaceful picketing of Parliament.

They left and agreed to co-operate with the Police.

Port-of-Spain Demonstration

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 12 May 84 p 1

[Article by Gail Alexander]

[Text] In an eleventh-hour decision yesterday, residents of several areas who came to Port of Spain to stage a water-shortage demonstration in front of the Red House received permission from the Police Commissioner to do so.

More than 300 residents of Rousillac, La Brea, Fyzabad, Mayaro and Manzanilla combined had planned to go ahead and hold their demonstration protesting lack of water in their districts, despite a warning issued previously by Police Commissioner Randolph Burroughs that any such demonstration would be illegal.

Mr Burroughs said on Thursday that the planned demonstration would have been in breach of the law since he had not received "any application from anyone requesting permission to hold a demonstration march." Such public protests, he added, required application to be made in writing at least 24 hours--or not more than 14 days in advance--before they take place.

Serious Matter

However, the residents, undaunted, still came to the city in their numbers and around 11.30 a.m. a member of the Fyzabad group, Mr Arthur Sanderson, requested a meeting with Mr Burroughs to discuss the intended demonstration.

He returned at 1.40 p.m. to tell the group who were gathered in Woodford Square that the Police Commissioner had granted permission for them to hold a peaceful demonstration in front the Red House, but one which would not impede traffic or pedestrians in any way.

The protesters began filtering into Woodford Square from around 12.45 p.m. carrying red flags and slogan-bearing placards stating their plight. And most were upset about the shortage of water in their respective areas. Mr Evans Ramadarsingh, County Councillor for Fyzabad said:

"We are willing to risk getting locked up, we don't care if the police arrest us, because the matter we are talking about is a serious one, it has reached crisis proportions, and it has to be drawn to the attention of the people in the House.

"We are doing what has to be done, and what we would like to see is a total suspension of standing orders in the House of Representatives, and have the big boys look after our water shortage matter now: we have waited too long."

Residents from the Rousillac-Fyzabad-La Brea areas related how they had been without water for more than ten years and others from the Mayaro district chimed in that they had been without for more than 20 years.

Many of them said they depended on agriculture for their livelihood and without water their rate of production could be nowhere near beneficial.

The protesters were able to give vocal vent to their feelings from around 2 p.m. when the protest march got underway. They paraded up and down on the sidewalk outside Woodford Square, facing the Red House where Parliament was in progress and they did not flinch when the rain began to fall. Remarks from passersby such as "They come for water, and they really get water" did not rile them either, neither did the presence of an unusual number of policemen in the Red House area, and barricades right around the block.

CSO: 3298/824

BRIEFS

ONR TOUR--The Organisation for National Reconstruction (ONR) begins this week a meet-the-party tour of all constituencies by its political leader, Karl Hudson-Phillips. The tour runs from May to August, and begins on Tuesday at 7 p.m. at Salick's Commercial School, corner of Morton Street and the Eastern Main Road, Tunapuna. The agenda includes opening remarks by the constituency organisation chairman and progress reports and plans by various officers and the elected representative. The feature address will be given by Mr Hudson-Phillips on the state of the party and its political thrust followed by comments from the membership. The tour continues on Wednesday, again at 7 p.m. with the Diego Martin Central constituency at Sparrow's Hideaway. Couva North will be on the following evening. The tour resumes on May 15 in Barataria and continues until August. Meanwhile, ONR members, supporters and friends are invited to an all-day fun-raising fete today from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the home of Mr and Mrs Hudson-Phillips, Nutmeg Avenue, Haleland Park, Maraval. [Text] [Port-of-Spain SUNDAY GUARDIAN in English 6 May 84 p 16]

SUGAR WORKERS SETTLEMENT--The Industrial Court last week ordered Caroni Limited to pay out more than \$2 million in premium rates to over 2,000 shift workers. The order came in an oral judgment handed down by Mr Hector McClean and Mr Gaston Benjamin. The dispute was between Caroni Ltd and the All Trinidad Sugar and General Workers' Trade Union. The union considers the decision an important one since it should set a precedent for similar cases and for the payment of shift workers throughout the country. Caroni Limited confirmed the aspects of the judgment but said that it had not yet calculated the payout figure. [Excerpts] [Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 15 May 84 p 4]

PNM 'IMAGE' BOLSTERING--Party groups of the ruling People's National Movement operating in the St Joseph and St Augustine constituencies have embarked on joint projects to restore the party's image as a "party of the people." Early last week a joint executive meeting was held at Curepe. The meeting discussed common approach to problem solving, planning, communication, the drawing up a list of suggestions for future activities, the need to maintain links and expand meetings to include neighbouring constituencies. The new perspectives of the PNM and the work of the League were also dealt with. Decision was taken to meet on the first Monday of the month from July 2.

A committee for follow-up action was named. Among the members are Mr Deodath Maharaj; Mr H. Roopia; Mr L. Seebaran; Mr Cuthbert Alvarez, Mr Abdool Nabbie and Mr St Elmo Gopaul. [Text] [Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 15 May 84 p 15]

ONR TEAM FOR GRENADA--Mr Karl Hudson-Phillips, Political Leader of the Organisation for National Reconstruction (ONR) is among those in the ONR Goodwill Mission which leaves for Grenada this week. The Goodwill Mission is a result of a decision by the last ONR National Conference, held at Mount Hope Junior Secondary School in November 1983, and a directive from the National Executive of the ONR to re-establish cordial relations between the people of Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada. Members of the ONR are: Mr Hudson-Phillips, Mr Clive Pantin, First Vice-Chairman of the ONR; Councillor Arthur Sanderson, ONR/Fyzabad, the Party's Youth Officer and member of the OWTU General Council; Dr Robert Maharaj, a medical practitioner and ONR candidate for Princes Town in the 1981 General Elections; Mr Ronnie Ramcharan, ONR National Treasurer; a lady member of the ONR's National Organisation for Women; and Mr Lennox Raphael, ONR's Public Relations Officer. Part of the team will leave for St George's today. The others will arrive in Grenada on Friday morning for a hectic round of concentrated visits. [Text] [Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 16 May 84 p 1]

CSO: 3298/824

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